

The magazine for members of

The **ARM** *Club*

**Reports on Acorn World
and BETT**

**Rocks, Minerals & Fossils
on CD-ROM**

**Acorn's preview of the
new games**

Clip art from Canada



Issue 25 — Spring 1998

Acorn Considers End Of Desktops

Acorn has been seriously considering whether to end the production of desktop computers so as to concentrate on developing the other ARM powered devices which are now proving so successful in the world wide technology markets.

This was revealed by Chris Cox when answering questions during the opening seminar at Acorn World. Fortunately, he went on to say that the idea had been dropped — for good, hard-headed business reasons.

Apart from the fact that there is still sufficient demand to make the Risc PC and its successor profitable, Acorn has found the computer an efficient and effective way of showcasing its technological developments.

The same point was made by Acorn's Managing Director, David Lee, at an after-show party.

Both explained that while all developers would speak to potential

corporate customers about the marvels of their new technology and describe it in glowing terms, Acorn was able to make a much stronger impression by using a Risc PC to demonstrate that a prototype actually worked.

An unsentimental look

Companies in the volatile arena of modern technology need to adapt to the changing scene to survive and it is only to be expected that Acorn would have to take an unsentimental look at its product range. So it is encouraging to know that Acorn's decision to continue producing desktop computers still makes sound economic sense.

Those of use who prefer using ARM and RISC OS and don't have to suffer Wintel in our working life can continue with our choice of machines, at least for the immediately foreseeable future.

Peter Jennings

All opinions expressed in Eureka are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Club or its Committee members and officers.

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Acorn World 97

I got to the show a little bit late on Friday morning, due to the thick fog preventing even the usual suicidal overtaking manoeuvres on the A40. I arrived at 9:50 but ticket holders had already been let in at 9:30. The show was in Hall 3 of Wembley this year.

on all three days to get a free CD of beta software (after signing a suitable disclaimer). Clan members could get something to eat up there and use the new Acorn browser on the CD to surf the Internet or play games.

Dave Ruck takes a close look at the attractions at Acorn World and, after viewing the girls on the AU stand, finds some exciting new hardware developments on show.

There was quite a large Acorn stand and a larger theatre this year. There was also some unused space at the back of the hall. Attendance was a bit low on the Friday and Sunday but it was a sterling effort from Acorn's Kerri Davies to get it all organised in only eight weeks. This had been dumped on her as her first major project after joining the company earlier this year. She had been to only one Acorn show before and that was in Holland in May.

The two main targets for everyone at the Show was the special Clan area and the Acorn stand. People queued up the stairs to the Clan area at times

On the way down the stairs, the prominent black towers of the Acorn stand were visible in the centre of the hall. The stand contained a small theatre at its centre, showing a film of Acorn's achievements and future directions. It was an hourly presentation but I didn't manage to get in all weekend.

All around the stand were demonstrations of Acorn's new technology from the latest and best spec'd Risc PC ever, with 233MHz StrongARM, 32MB, 24x CD-ROM and Acorn's new Internet suite, to a prototype of the Risc PC II. Also on display was a range of Network

computers, including the new StrongARM based and radically styled coNCord, and a setup from Curtis Mathes integrating a large screen television, NC and video.

As Curtis Mathes is an American company its ISP is in Texas and apparently Acorn has spent the past six months constantly connected during development. They must have one hell of a phone bill! A friend and myself put coNCord through its paces controlling the TV and video, bringing up the electronic TV guide and surfing the net, all using the same TV remote control! You can also send email which my friend tried. Not being used to the alphabetical layout on the remote, he spent so long typing in the “isn't this the strangest thing you' ve ever received email from” message that one of the kind Acorn chaps brought him a keyboard to use!

Other things included several Acorn machines running Sega Megadrive games. As Acorn have signed a deal to allow these to work on Acorn NCs, hopefully this will be made available to the rest of us as well. Two Korean chaps were demonstrating a very nice

looking ARM powered box and colour LCD display running a moving map of California. It had the unusual feature of allowing you to write on the touch sensitive screen. So, for example, if you wrote 'hotel' the map would display the hotels nearby. I managed to discover that the actual hand writing recognition was being performed by a laptop PC running Windows (they had to keep opening it up to see if it had crashed). They assured me that this was only temporary and the ARM powered part (running RISC OS of course) would be doing the whole job soon.

The new Risc PC II

Many people's whole reason for going to the show was to try to glean some information on the new Risc PC II, due to be launched some time next year. There had been so many rumours flying around on the Internet, but with the people who really knew not being allowed to tell. No doubt the full preliminary spec will be published elsewhere, but the main points are: a smaller plug-in StrongARM processor card (speed to be decided, probably 300MHz+), 4MB of VRAM as standard (allowing up to 1152x896@24bit or

1600x1200@16bit), a 32bit wide system bus running at 66MHz, fast SDRAM, three PCI slots and three DEBI (old style 'podule') slots. This should add up to a machine at least four to six times faster than the current models. There is no second processor socket; PC capability will be via a PCI card. The new mother board unfortunately will not fit in existing Risc PCs and was housed in one of the new style PC cases which allows the mother board to be slid out without undoing screws or unplugging wires (apparently one of only three in the country). This was a slim line desktop case, although Acorn envisage a mini-tower will be the final configuration. A number of radical designs and colour schemes were being shown in a slide show display next to it. One interesting point was that Acorn had to borrow the case and so could not cut out the back to allow podule cards to fit.

New products were a bit thin on the ground, with the occasional gem such as !Win95FS from Warm Silence Software which extends DOSFS to deal with long Windows filenames and preserve Acorn file types correctly. Also bundled is a patch for

the filer to sort large directories such as the huge Windows directory, making life much easier. PowerTec were offering new drivers for parallel port ZIP drives and a filing system to allow additional ADFS partitions on large IDE drives. New hardware seemed to be mostly SCSI cards, with offerings from Castle Storm, Eesox and PowerTec SCSI3 .

Shiny red sports car

The SpaceTech stand were selling a new disc of effect plug-ins for PhotoDesk (still waiting for layers). Top Model has an update to version 2.12, a disc of distortion plug-ins and a CD full of models and textures. The author, Giancarlo, was there doing some stunning demos of the new features. He took a nice shiny red sports car and with a few clicks of the mouse crumpled it and bent it round a palm tree (similar to the damage I'd seen in the fog that morning). His model of the local church is an astounding demonstration of the texture mapping facilities with beautiful Italian Renaissance paintings and statues covering the walls contrasting with the rich wood of the pews. I had to tear myself away to actually buy the stuff!

Bargains were to be had on the NCS charity stand. If you were really quick and got there before The ARM Club's Matt, you could have picked up several expensive podules, such as CC's Eagle digitiser, for next to nothing. By the Sunday afternoon certain items such as 32MB and 64MB SIMMs could be snapped up for ridiculously low prices from some of the large dealers.

Lucky dip and lovely girls

The Acorn User charity lucky dip had large queues again, with the children after the prizes and the adults after the lovely AU girls (Karen, Joanne, Jane and Helen) no doubt. The prizes were much better this year and I won a T-shirt on one of my several goes.

The theatre was well attended, with presentations from both Acorn and the major developers; the most popular being the one and a half hour Chris Cox and Peter Bondar talk on future Acorn developments.

A video wall was laid on behind for the extra crowds. Unfortunately I was unable to get away from the stand so will have to wait for a transcript on the Internet.

The third largest stand at the show belonged to The ARM Club which we shared with a number of local user groups. The new Association of Acorn User Groups, run by Neil Spellings, is really making a good effort to coordinate all the local interest groups and make our voice stronger in the market.

Plenty of flyers for local events were available and maps of the UK and the world showed the locations of the various groups. A few people had made it from as far as Italy and New Zealand to ensure they were represented.

The ARM Club enjoyed signing up many new members and making renewals as well as selling our products such as PDCD2 and StrongGuard. Always having a large number of volunteers on stand, we were able to offer the benefit of our expertise as power users and developers to give both members and non-members help with their problems and purchasing advice although we did consider charging a pound a time for answering the question: "Where do we get the free Clan CD?"

Task Force Clip Art Collection

Ten thousand images for £34.95 the man said. So I wrote a letter and within ten days a rather heavy package arrived. It contained a CD-ROM in a plastic bag, a floppy disc

The Task Force collection consists of 10,000 vector graphics images (like Draw files) which are supplied in the PC formats of WMF (Windows Metafiles) and CGM (Computer

The latest Transatlantic collection of clip art — this time from Canada — comes to Acorns with DIY conversion programs. Nick Evans has been browsing through it.

and a book with about 380 pages of illustrations showing thumbnails of the entire CD's contents.

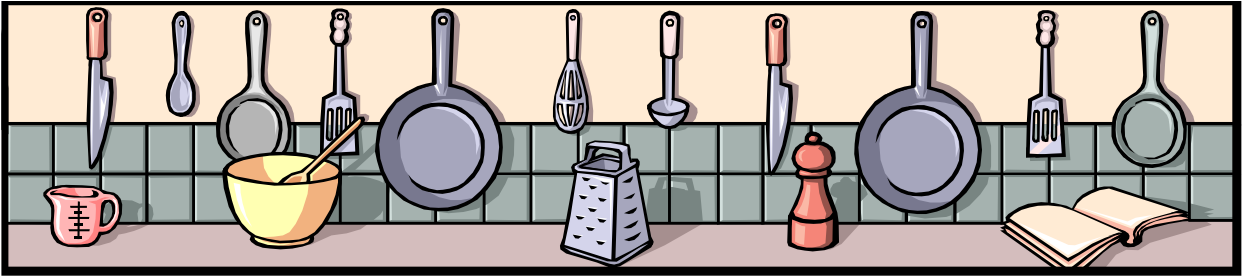
The CD is produced by a Canadian company called Task Force for the PC market and brought over by Mike Williams of Akalat fame.

The subject of the sections include animals, architecture, arts, business, environment, events, food, household, industry etc etc — in fact, all the subjects that exist in all the clip art libraries.



Graphics Metafile). Every image is supplied twice, once in WMF format and once in CGM format. It is up to you which you choose to use. Commercial software is available to convert WMF files to their Draw file equivalents.

The floppy disc which is supplied with the Task Force collection also provides software which will convert WFM and CGM files into Draw format being the Keith Sloan careware utilities !CGM->Draw and !WMF->Draw.



The Task Force collection also includes, as a bonus, a collection of 500 photographic images. These are again in a PC format, BMP (Windows bitmap). Each image is supplied in low resolution (Photos1) and high resolution (Photos2) and can be converted to RISC OS sprite format using ChangeFSI supplied with RISC OS. The low resolution images are approximately 100K in size, and the high resolution images are around 1MB.

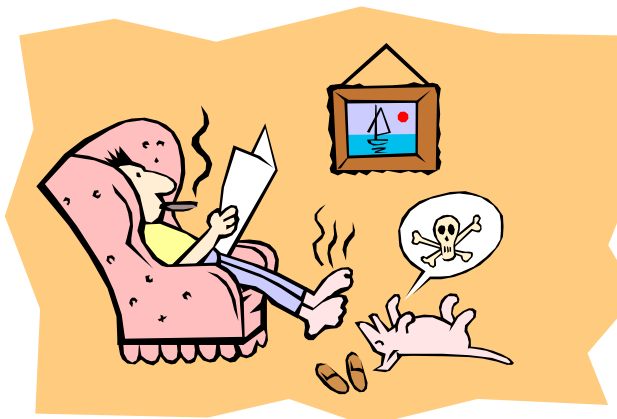
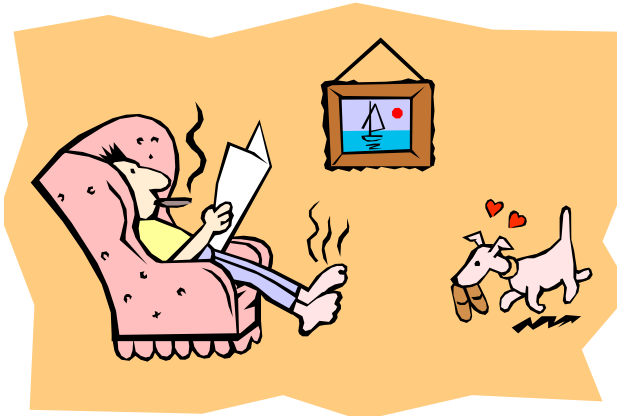
The !ChangeFSI version is quite an old one and it is a pity that The opportunity wasn't taken to distribute the latest version.

The files are given meaningless titles on the CD and so the book is

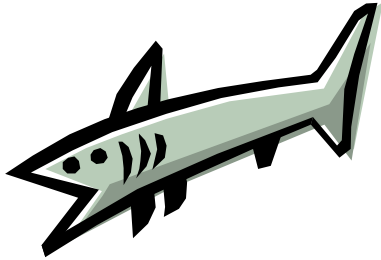
absolutely essential and each file has to be downloaded and processed through one of the file converting programs before it can be shown. I have not so far had any problems with converting any of the files and they have all looked exactly as in their thumbnail. The process itself does become a little tedious after a while, but then I always do want things

yesterday. To be fair it does only take a few seconds to convert the clip art.

The quality of the graphics is high and I have found some files that have been useful to me. Usually there seem to be a handful that I use on each collection of



clip art but this seems to have more useful ones than most. However there are some files that I cannot conceive anyone using such as this one of a

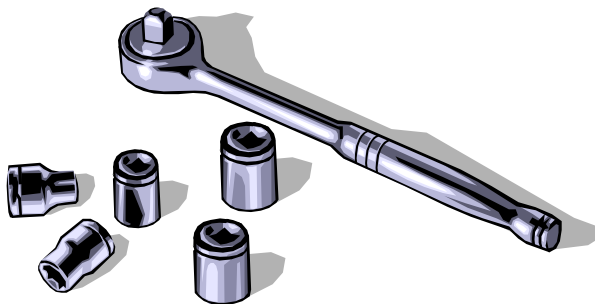


shark but then someone must have drawn it for some reason.

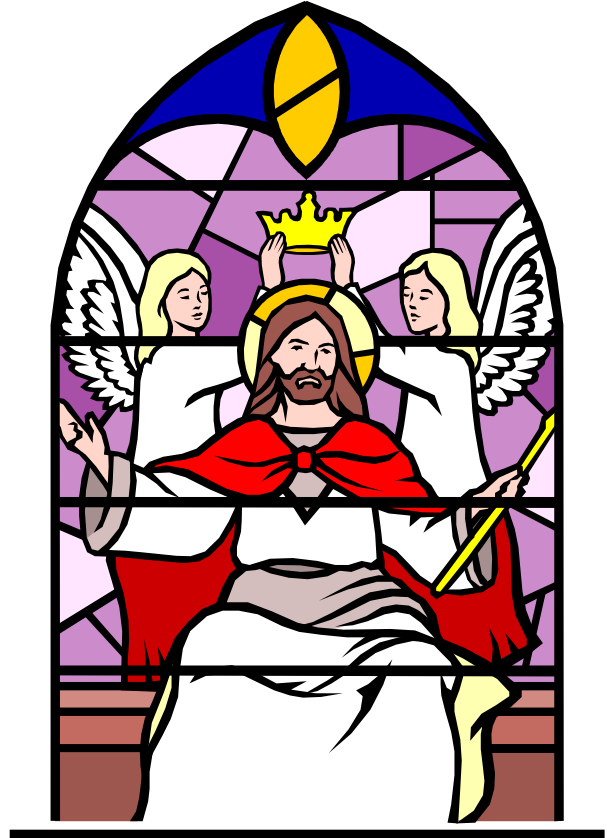
There are many good pieces of clip art — certainly more than I have so far seen on a CD, and, as I said, some that I have used a couple of times already.

All in all it is a useful CD and I can certainly recommend it. The book accompanying it provides essential help.

For those with a PC the display software on the CD is very good and makes it extremely easy to use view and extract the clip art.



Internet users can get some free samples on the World Wide Web (see the information box below).



Task Force Clip Art

Price: £34.95 inc VAT

+ £3 postage (£4.50 Europe)

Supplier: Akalat Publishing

PO Box 231, Barton,

Bedford MK45 4HQ

Tel/Fax: 01582 881614

Email: akalat@kbnet.co.uk

Web: www.nms.co.uk/acornpub

also www.nvtech.com from where sample images can be downloaded.

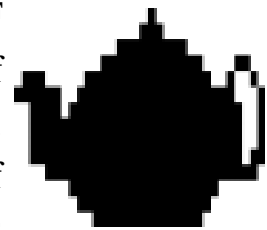
JARGON BUSTER

Confused about the different types of computer graphics? Here's a simple explanation in the second of our new series of Jargon Busters. For all practical purposes there are two systems with a third, more specialised one.

- **Vector** or line graphics, such as Draw, ArtWorks and Vector, are composed of lines which form objects, including enclosed shapes which can be colour filled. These are plotted from co-ordinates which are stored as blocks of data. The big advantage is that vector graphics can be greatly increased in size without losing resolution. A disadvantage is that complex drawings can take longer to plot on the screen.

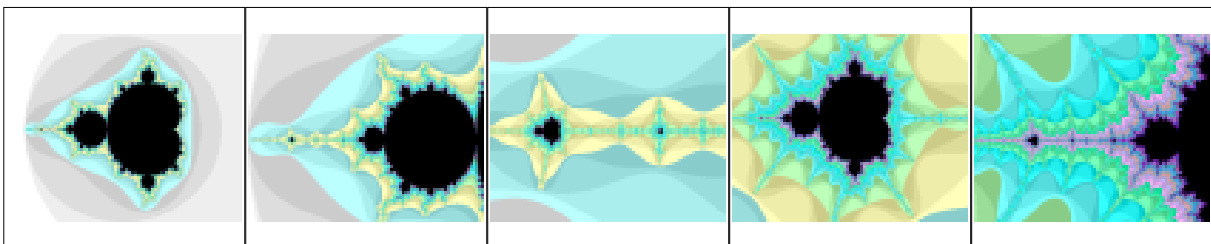


- **Bitmap** or pixel graphics, such as Paint (sprites), GIF, TIFF and JPEG are made up of dots which can be in a variety of shades and colours. The big advantage is ease of editing, making it possible to add, delete and change the colour of whole areas or individual pixels. The main disadvantage is that increasing the image size by only a small amount makes it chunky and badly defined.



*A sprite with
a x3 zoom*

- **Mathematical** or algorithm graphics such as the Mandelbrot and Julia sets are used to make elaborate and often beautiful designs. They produce fractal patterns which can be infinitely enlarged to reveal more and more intricate detail.



Progressive enlargements of the area on the left of the image

CD Name Fix

If you've ever copied a RISC OS application off a CD using a PC you will have found that none of the files have filetypes and a lot of the filenames are incorrect, so preventing it from being used. It is possible to fix this by hand but very tedious.

on the Eureka disc, attempts to solve both these problems by renaming application files which have been mangled by PCs and DOS and giving them their correct types.

To use, open the application you want fixed, by holding down *Shift* and

Dave Ruck offers a neat solution to the problem of missing filetypes and abbreviated file names when RISC OS applications are copied off CD-ROM on a PC.

Also if you have copied an application to a DOS disc, you will find that it will run from there but not when copied back to an ADFS disc. This is because a DOS disc can only handle files with eight letters and so shortens filenames, such as: *!RunImage* to *!RunImag* and *Templates* to *Template*. When running them from a DOS disc, RISC OS is clever enough to realise the eight character limit and find the files, but back on ADFS *!RunImag* is not considered the same as *!RunImage* and the application will fail.

The obey file CDNameFix, which is

double clicking on it, and then copy CDNameFix inside. Double click on CDNameFix and the names and types of files will be changed. CDNameFix can then be removed but running it twice won't do any harm.

Note however some files may still need their names and types altered, or the application might produce errors.

CDNameFix sets up system variables to form command macros to do the work of renaming and changing the type. It also uses the commands *IfThere* and *Repeat* which are available only from RISC OS 3.5 on.

Mangled Name	RISC OS name	Filetype
_Boot	!Boot	Obey
_RUN	!Run	Obey
_HELP	!HELP	Text
_SPRITES	!Sprites	Sprite
_SPRIT~1	!Sprites22	Sprite
_SPRIT~2	!Sprites23	Sprite
_RUNIM~1	!RunImage	Absolute
!RUNIMAG	!RunImage	Absolute
SPRITES	Sprites	Sprite
SPRITE~1	Sprites22	Sprite
TEMPLA~1	Templates	Template
TEMPLATE	Templates	Template
MESSAG~1	Messages	Text
_<any>	!<any>	File/Directory

Bearsheet 2

OK. Hands up who actually *likes* spreadsheets? I thought so!

Like many people, I suspect, one of my nightmares is being trapped at a party by somebody whose hobby is

(even down to ‘Point and click once (LHB) on the disk drive icon’. A handy glossary below indicates that, by LHB, they mean Left Hand Button and explains the words *icon* and the phrase *icon bar*. When was the last

Chris Price, a reluctant teacher of spreadsheets, finds a user-friendly one he can enthuse about with a manual that can put him right.

double entry book-keeping, and who views spreadsheets as a form of pleasure.

Unfortunately, as a teacher, spreadsheets, albeit at a very elementary level, are one of the things that I, and others, have to teach.

Those nice people at ERIC have taken it upon themselves to produce a user-friendly elementary spreadsheet that won’t give you the vapours — and they have done a very good job.

Point and click

Bearsheet arrives in a handy A5 size wallet with an A5 handbook which is extremely clear and assumes nothing

time you read a manual that was this clear?

The manual then proceeds to go through each of the function key uses (What’s a function key, Dad? Read this and you’ll find out.) in such a way that it is impossible to make a mistake. Indeed, I can truly say that the only times that I got something wrong and muttered, (*expletive deleted*) manual!, a careful re-reading of it showed that it was I, and not the manual, that was at fault.

Function keys are used extensively which is one of the delights of this program, for a simple referral to the manual will tell you exactly which

=

F_N

+

-

×

÷

Print

Format

A1

Sweets

	A	B	C	D	E	
1	Sweets	Cakes	Choc	Nougat	J/Babies	L. Allsort
2	Mike	23	4	3	66	
3	Maisie	4	34	49	32	
4	Brian	50	30	35	14	
5	Peter	23	1	17	30	
6	Pauline	1	3	20	42	
7						
8	Total	101	72	124	184	
9						
10						
11						
12						
13						
14						
15						

key to press. Time does not permit me to give a more extensive description of these pages, but careful reading of the manual should do this. The program has two levels — elementary and advanced. Numbers that are entered can be either whole integers or run to two decimal places.

Harassed teachers

The save facility permits you to save three different ways — as a Bearsheet, CSV or Draw file. The program has a facility for you to align the writing in the boxes (left justify, centre, right justify) and a comprehensive print facility for harassed teachers.

I've seen some so-called junior

spreadsheet packages before that, frankly, didn't impress me. This does impress me. Given the low cost of a site licence, I can heartily recommend it. If you are thinking of investing in a junior spreadsheet, then, to my mind you really only have one choice. Bearsheet2 is well ahead of the pack — and then some.

Bearsheet 2

Price: £24.95

Site licence: £49.90

Supplier: ERIC

Pepabera, Findon Road,
Findon, W.Sussex BN14 0RD.

Tel/Fax: 01903 872400

Email: pworley@ericint.u-net.com

Rocks, Minerals And Fossils

Rocks, minerals and fossils are everyday objects which interest far more people than the geologists and palaeontologists who are professionally concerned with them. Many have long been prized for their decorative value and supposed medical and mystical attributes.

discs on the subjects of art, geography, history, modern foreign languages, music and science.

Rocks, Minerals and Fossils contains modules on: Igneous Rocks, Metamorphic Rocks, Sedimentary Rocks, Common Minerals, Crystals,

Peter Jennings explores on CD-ROM the fascinating world of rocks, crystals and the fossil remains of creatures extinct for millennia.

The new CD-ROM in the AVP PictureBase series, which can be used on Acorn and PC machines, looks at them in a purely scientific way but their attractions for collectors and gem wearers can be easily understood when looking at the high definition pictures which illustrate it throughout.

PictureBase is far more than the graphics presentation program its name might suggest. It is a multimedia electronic library with a series of modules as the equivalent of its books. These are available in a wide range of educational CDs and

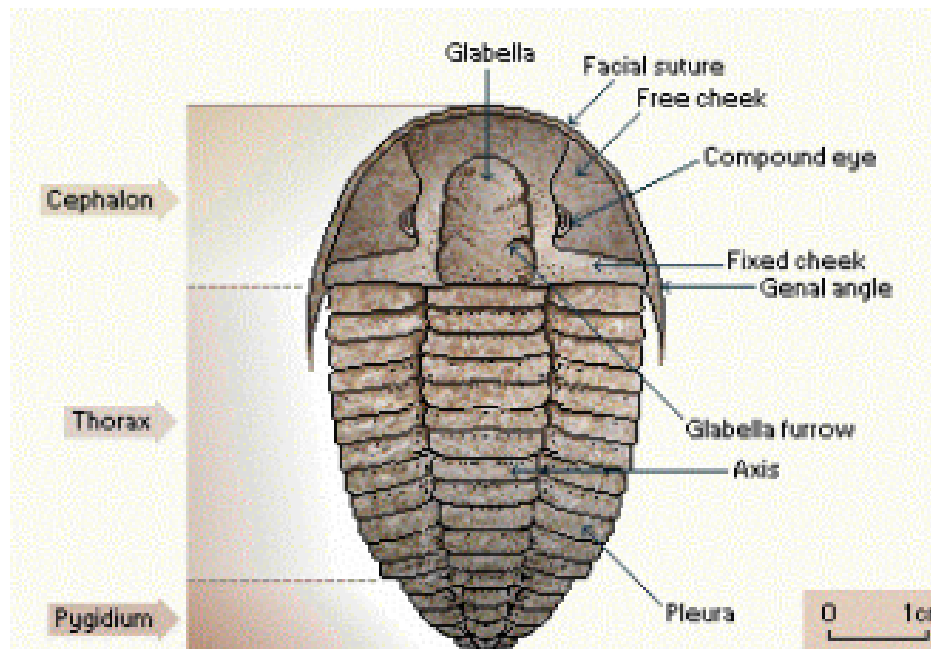
Mining, Fossilisation and Common Fossils.

The program is installed from the CD-ROM onto hard disc and takes up 3,814,912 bytes of memory. It is then loaded onto the icon bar and run from there in the usual way, although it is still necessary to have the CD loaded to access the data. There is an accompanying 76-page PictureBase manual, which can safely be ignored until you want to discover the less obvious facilities that the program offers. There are a lot to discover but only a few of them can be mentioned here.

Clicking on the icon bar icon opens a window, which occupies about four-fifths of the screen. This window is divided into seven areas, the main one containing a picture, with its title in a small panel above it. Next to this is a

description panel with scrollable text, with a small panel above this containing the name of the loaded module, and below is a user notepad. Finally there are a dozen icons to control it all and, below these, a seemingly blank area where a panel can be opened for key words which link to the current picture.

The description panel opens with some general instructions. It says, rather confusingly, that scrolling is carried out by clicking below or above the panel margins—which has no effect—rather than on the arrow icons which appear within the panel itself. The description text cannot be altered but it can be printed out or



The anatomy of a typical trilobite

saved to a disc or into the user notepad and the copy can then be edited if required.

The picture can be zoomed to full screen but the description text can be read only in its rather narrow panel and scrolled a line at a time. There are, however, sound files which can, optionally, provide a spoken commentary.

The individual modules are arranged in a logical progression but are self contained and can be looked at in any order. You can choose how you want to do this on a contents page which lists the picture titles in each module and allows you to go direct to any



Lace agate

one, view them all as a sheet of 'thumbnails' or go to the first, from where you can work through at your own pace or view them automatically in sequence, at a speed you can set yourself, while reading the description or hearing it spoken. The first modules refer to the three types of rock formations and the introduction to each of these includes some brief reference to the others to explain the basic differences between them. As with all the other modules, each page is beautifully illustrated with examples or diagrams.

Common Minerals explains and illustrates the various classifications, with video clips showing methods of testing such qualities as specific gravity, magnetism and

reaction to hydrochloric acid.

Some of the most beautiful and highly prized minerals are those which occur in crystallised form, notably the gemstones. The Crystals module illustrates the variety of shapes, colours and lustres that result from the

arrangement of the atoms within them.

In all these modules, I would like to have seen the chemical formula shown for each specimen. It is occasionally given in the commentary while not being included in the printed description.

Mining looks at the way people have gathered and used minerals, from the



The needle-like form of antimonite crystals

Stone Age quarrying for flint to make tools to the deep cast mining of modern times and the present day awareness of the need to manage these finite resources. It ends with a diagram and summary of mining terms.



Stalagmites growing from drips of lime-rich water in a cave

Fossilisation and Common Fossils may disappoint anyone whose interest is confined to Jurassic Park monsters as these modules deal with the smaller, humbler, varieties, many of which are far easier to find on Britain's beaches and in quarries. Fossilisation gives a good account of the various ways in which creatures and plants, which could be expected to decay away without trace, can be preserved over the millennia and Common Fossils illustrates their wide variety. It would have been useful to have included some maps of where to find them, such as the coast between Lyme Regis and Charmouth in Dorset where ammonites, trilobites and

belemnites can be picked up in abundance and the occasional dinosaur bones are still being discovered.

Rocks, Minerals and Fossils has been designed as an educational aid for Key Stages two to four but it can be recommended to anyone, of any age, with an interest in the subjects covered. It can be worked through to provide good basic groundings in geology and palaeontology or browsed through just to enjoy the pictures, taking in as much information on each as you want.

Product

Price: £81.08 inc VAT
 Site licence: £163.33 inc VAT
 Supplier: AVP
 School Hill Centre, Chepstow
 Monmouthshire NP6 5PH
 Tel: 01291 625439
 Fax: 01291 629671
 Email:
 100441.130@compuserve.com

Memphis & TempDir

I have recently been using a very useful program recommended to me by fellow ARM Club member, Stan Hasselton. It is a RAM disc utility called Memphis and I feel it may be of use to other Acorn users. First, why is it called Memphis? Memphis=MemFS. Get it?

Memphis utilises the SystemSprite area to get over this problem.

Double click and it loads an icon, very similar to the normal RAM disc, onto the icon bar on the left with the other filing systems and it can then be treated in the same manner. Click on it

Geoff Lane discovers two utilities that offer more flexible alternatives to the RAM Disc and avoid the irritation of finding you haven't set enough memory for your needs.

What does it do ? Ah, here's the good bit: it is a re-sizable RAM disc that automatically grows as you load data into it and then automatically shrinks as you empty it out. It therefore wastes no memory. It also supports long file names (up to 32 chars) and more than 77 files per directory.

Frustrating

This was always a failing with the conventional RAM disc on Acorn machines where the size cannot be altered if the RAM disc contained data; very frustrating when you needed to copy something into it to find it was full.

and a window opens into which programs or files can be moved, copied or saved. Other methods are explained in the HelpFile.

Clicking the Menu button over the icon gives four options: Info and Quit give the obvious effects; Free works in the same way as the normal RAM disc and Create allows you to create an X-Files filing system.

X-Files, which is a separate program and does not have to be loaded for Memphis to work, allows you to use long file names and have more than 77 files in a special directory. I will

not go into this further because I do not understand it fully.

When loaded empty, Memphis uses only 32K on my A3000 and really is simple and effective.

The latest versions that I have of both Memphis and X-Files are on the Eureka disc.

TempDir

Another useful little proggy recommended by Stan can be used in a similar manner to Memphis but is in fact a *completely* different method of filing. It is called TempDir and I have been using version 1.14.

When run for the first time it creates its own storage directory.

Before loading it, make sure you have opened the filer window containing the System Scrap Directory (usually the root directory). When I first loaded TempDir from a floppy and hadn't opened my hard drive filer window my machine locked up because TempDir could not find somewhere to create its own directory, although this is apparently cured in version 1.16.

Once loaded an icon appears on the icon bar and from here it is simplicity itself.

Clicking Menu over the icon gives 'Info and Quit'. Need I say more?

A click with Select (the left mouse button) opens a directory named whatever the date is and a click with Adjust (the right mouse button) closes it. This date naming is very useful in particular for messages from BBSs or the Internet. The other interesting feature is that if you don't put any files into it, the empty directory will be automatically deleted the next time TempDir is loaded, saving clutter.

The directory containing the previously created and dated directories can be accessed very easily by closing the opened TempDir window using *Adjust* on the window's close icon.

The program will also automatically delete directories over a certain age, which can be set by the user. Inside the TempDir directory (which can be opened by holding down shift and double clicking the mouse button) is the !Run file. drop this on to Edit and

there will be a command as follows:
Set tempdir%days 31.

If you alter the number (31 in this case) to whatever you prefer and resave !Run then the directories and their contents will be automatically deleted after that number of days. This saves ending up with loads of unwanted directories. Apparently TempDir is also Millennium proof!

The program was originally free to single users but from version 1.16 it has become shareware and the price is now a tenner to both single and multiple users.

Is it worth a tenner ? Hmmmm!!! You can decide for yourself. A copy of version 1.16 is on the Eureka disc.

Memphis

Price: Free

Author: Brian Brunswick

Contact: Nick Smith

ANT Ltd

PO Box 300 Cambridge CB1 2EG

Email: nas@bi.org

Web: bi.org/~nas/

TempDir

Shareware price: £10 inc VAT

Site licence: £10 inc VAT

Supplier: Quantum Software

35 Pinewood Park, Deans

Livingston, EH54 8NN

Tel: 01506 411162

email: sales@quantumsoft.co.uk

web:

www.cybervillage.co.uk/acorn/qs/

Notices

Due to space limitations in the magazine the description of the Eureka disc contents has been moved to a textfile on the floppy disc.

The ARM Club can now offer a Hard Disc backup service to its members. For £25 the Club will back up your hard disc onto a GOLD CD. We can accept ZIP discs, 135 Syquests, 105 Syquests and also IDE or SCSI hard discs. For more details contact Matthew Cook by email to: matt@armclub.org.uk or at the Club's new Freepost address: FREEPOST 'The ARM Club'.

Schedule+ By Xdevelopments

I have been using Lotus Organiser on the PC side as there is nothing on the Acorn machines to compete. As I use the Acorn Pocket Book II extensively I find that Lotus Organiser or Microsoft Schedule (as

first impression of it, On loading the program the main window appears once you click on the icon on the icon bar. The first icon on this leads to the Navigation View window. From this you can save to CSV for export into a

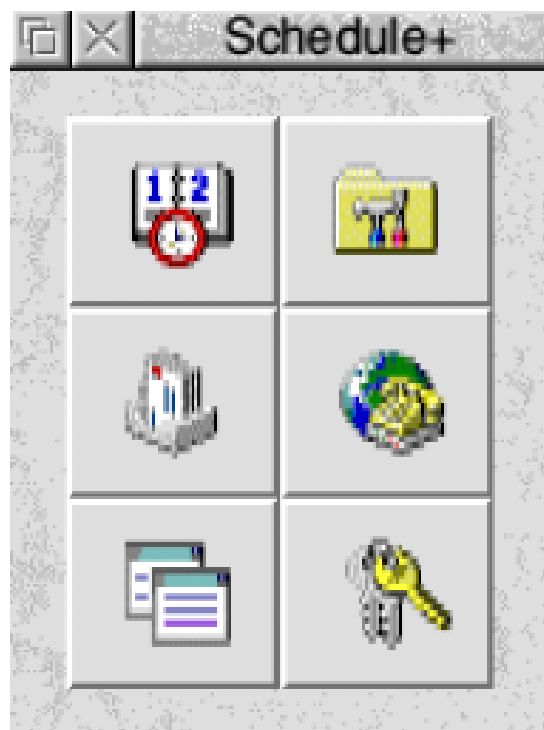
A new organiser for the Pocket Book, by a new name in Acorn software houses, is tested by Ralph Sillett, who still hankers after an Acorn version of Lotus.

supplied with Microsoft Office) supplement the PB. With the use of PsiWin I can update either way (from the PB Agenda to Organiser or vice versa). I would like to see a program on the same scale on the Acorn machines, with all those Pocket Book machines (& Psions) out in the education sector.

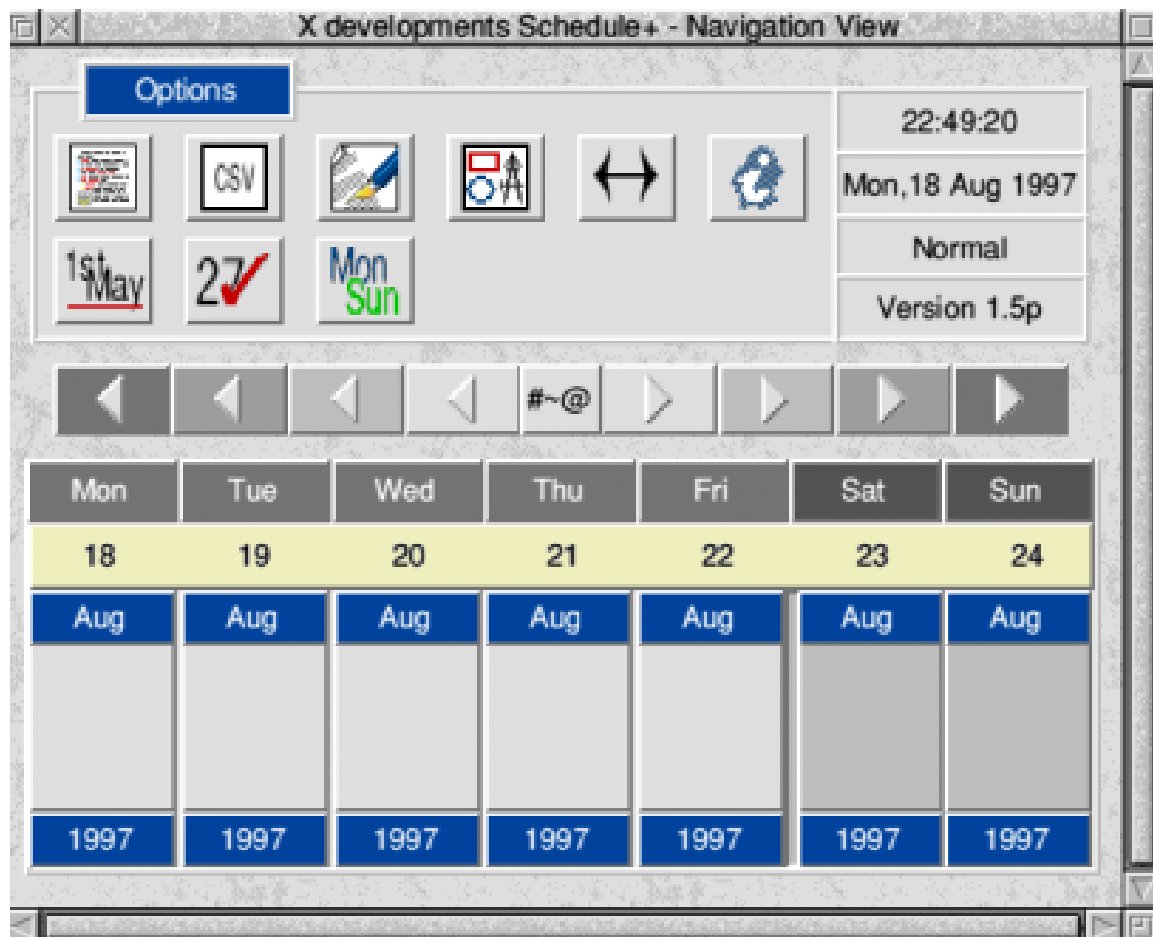
Explan had !Event which was supposed to link in with Agenda but was a struggle to get working right for me. !Event has now been placed in the public domain by Explan.

I have just been given !Schedule+ to try by Xdevelopments, a new name in Acorn software. The following is my

spreadsheet, HTML to create a web page (for what reason I don't know), Text for export to a WP package and



The main window



The Navigation View window

Draw to print out weekly plans. The person running is for jumping to a date, which for any date considerably into the future could take some time to get to on earlier machines. Info is the help files. The first icon on the second row is for your birthday/anniversary list. The next is for those important dates such as Bank holidays. The third icon (which looks like a clipboard) gives you a weekly view horizontally instead of the vertical column. I would prefer

this to be the default albeit a little smaller.

The Arrow brings up the Schedule+ toolbar. These buttons jump forward/backward one week, two weeks, a month, or a year. If you have been going one way and then go the other, you click the button twice as confirmation.

The other icons in the main window are for Notes, ToDo list, Setup,

International dialling codes and Password protection

I would like to see the icons re-designed by an artist such as Christopher Jarman. I don't like the layout of this window for two reasons:

- The area allocated to the typed in text is too small. The horizontal view would be better as the default, but a little smaller.
- The icons do not promote the product and are dull.

The area allocated for entering text is too small. The message input window will appear on clicking in the relevant date but only around the edge of the grey box or in the bottom third.

This program is surely what we need on Acorn machines. Over the few months that I have been using it I have fed back problems and suggestions to Xdevelopments and the product as it stands is good but could still do with a bit of work to make it a must on everyone's icon bar. Also merging with Agenda would be a great help even if it was only one way. The only

other contender in this category of programs is Datemaker, from Carlton Software, which I have previously written about in Eureka. Of the two programs Datemaker is more stable but over the next few months we may see some improvements to Schedule+ to counteract this.

Feedback and suggestions

It would possibly have helped the author to have put this version into the public domain for a while to gather feedback and suggestions. If you do decide to buy this product then help in its development by feeding suggestions and/or bugs to the author. Still on my wish list is Lotus Organiser for Acorn machines.

There is a special offer price for ARM Club members.

Schedule+

Price: £16.99 inc (Special offer of £10 to ARM Club members)

Supplier: Xdevelopments

18 Park Avenue

Wreccsam LL12 7AH

Tel: 01978 264929

Email: xeev@netmatters.co.uk

Hunter3 Search Program

Have you ever misplaced a file and forgotten the name? If so then this program is a must.

Written by Kade “Archer” Hansson in the sunny Southern hemisphere it is able to search the contents of a file for

Along the top are seven of what the author calls ‘bins’, the last four involve specialised searches explained in the help file and via ‘Help’. The first three are the ones I feel will be of interest to most users and are as follows:

Geoff Lane goes hunting through his files and directories for those elusive names and lost bits of code with a versatile new search program.

any kind of string. It can search for a word, part of a word, a sentence or a bit of programming code.

It can search files, any number of them within a directory and any number of directories. You can narrow down searches to certain types of files only or certain sizes of files and instructions can be in English or German.

Hunter uses Acorn’s ‘Help’ facility, so loading this could be useful.

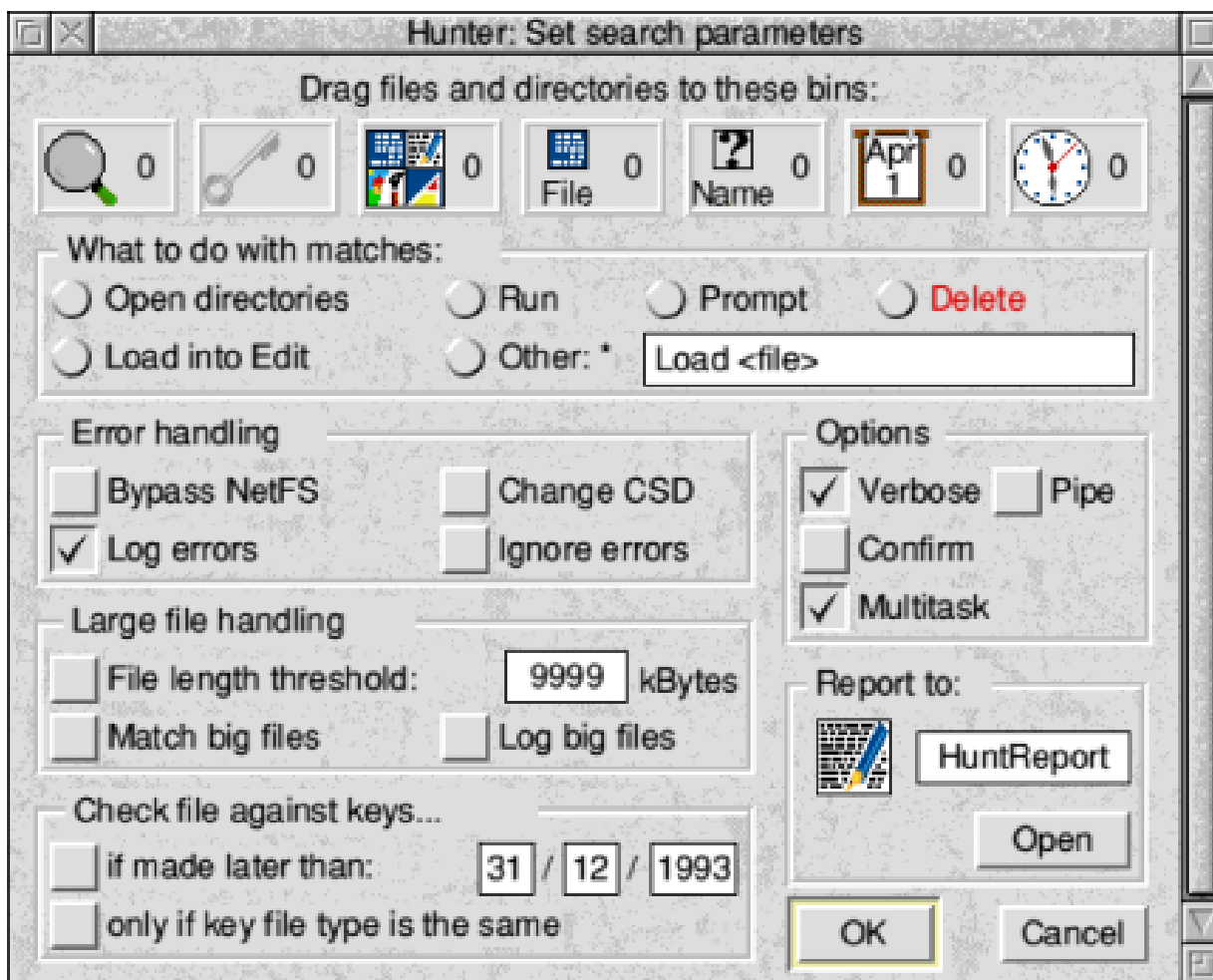
How does it work? Double click to load onto the icon bar and then a single click opens a control window.

1. Any files or directories to be searched are dragged into this ‘bin’.

2. What to search for is dragged in here (more on this later).

3. Filetypes to be searched are dragged here.

Below this you are given options as to what to do with ‘matches’; one of the options is *Delete*. Any delete function must be treated with caution and I feel that it would be preferable to choose ‘Open directories’ and then delete as normal. But it is in red for a reason so beware.



The control window with the seven 'bins' along the top

The *Report to* option allows any results to be saved to a text file for later viewing. Either drag this icon to some directory window or insert a valid file path. If this is used it is the *last* thing to be done.

Now to clarify the second or 'key bin' as mentioned above.

There are two ways to tell Hunter what to look for:

1. The easiest, if the search string is simple, is to press the menu mouse button on the Hunter window and slide across *Add new key*. Now type in what you want it to search for. You will notice the counter on the 'bin' will increase when you click on OK. You can then enter a second string if you want.

2. The next method is for the more complicated searches and can include

control characters. Open an Edit file and type in what you want it to look for. This could be a BASIC command, control character, word or part of a word etc. Save the file (the name doesn't matter). It will probably be a file consisting of one word only.

If you want to search for three different words then three different one word files need to be saved. These are called 'keyfiles'. Drag all these 'keyfiles' into the second 'bin' and that is what Hunter will look for. Quite easy really.

A word of warning. Hunter recognises spaces and carriage returns etc. so make sure you enter exactly what you want it to search for. I did a search for some files with my name in it, I got a result of *No Files* when I knew there were some. The reason? I had accidentally inserted a space after my name in the 'key file' (couldn't see it, of course) and within the files my name was always followed by a full stop or a comma.

Another tip: all searches are case sensitive so if you are looking for a word that may contain capitals then put two options in the 'key bin', such

as 'Geoff' in one text file and 'geoff' in the other. Alternatively, just search for 'eoff', leaving out the suspect capital. Beware though, accidentally putting in an easy word to search for or Hunter may end up matching loads of files.

You can narrow down searches by limiting the size or date of files checked. Finally, you have options as to what to do with them: load them, run them or open the directories they are in.

An excellent program and a credit to Kade.

Hunter3 is on the Eureka disc accompanying this magazine.

Hunter3

Price: Free

Author: Kade Hansson

Kasoft Software

4/73 Alexander Street

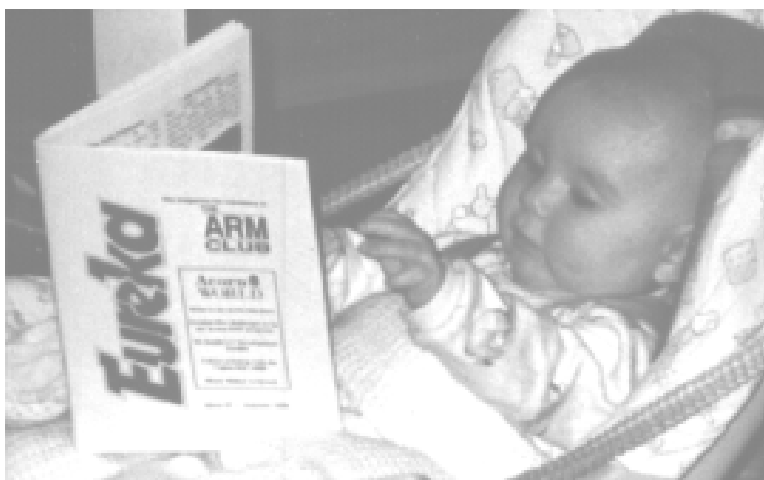
Shearwater 7307, Australia

Tel: 61 3 64287448

Email:

kade_fh@postoffice.utas.edu.au

You're (almost) never too young...



...or too old



Katharine, aged 4½ months, has been introduced to the Club by her grandfather, Ken Causer.

*Cartoon by
Jan Pearce*

to take an active part in The ARM Club

Your membership of The ARM Club gives you the opportunity to take part in all its many activities. Everyone is welcome to help with the Club's organisation, contribute to Eureka, assist at shows and open days and, if you have the skill, join the technical advice team. You can help to provide the services that make the Club what it is.

Enjoy an active membership

Special Report

Imagine an enthusiastic whole page write up on the Risc PC in a digital edition of a magazine read by professional photographers, with the promise of more to come in future issues. That's actually happened in the December 1997 issue of Photon,

several seconds on a PC and more than a minute to load on a Mac.

Using RISC OS was compared with having an automatic gear on a car instead of a manual change and StrongARM was said to make the

The Editor reports on some items of news which you may not have read elsewhere, including a recognition of the Risc PC's capabilities in digital photography.

from Icon Publications, whose readers are more used to hearing about Apple computers as the only possible competition to Wintel machines.

The article, prominently illustrated with a picture of a Risc PC 700, has been written by Photon's Digital Edition Editor, Richard Kilpatrick, and there is an inserted comment from the magazine's Publisher and Editor in Chief, who had not previously seen a Risc PC in action.

He added that he was "astounded" at the Acorn machine's speed when it instantly opened a text file which took

Mac look pedestrian when performing complex effects on digital images.

But it was not just the speed of the machine which impressed the magazine. In a long and appreciative look at Photodesk 2, it described the software as being a match for the much vaunted PhotoDesk, "possibly even better in many respects" and costing a lot less.

Specifications and price details of the Risc PC and Photodesk were given and readers were invited to send an enquiry card for more information.



TextEase

Another well known RISC OS program to get a favourable mention was TextEase, which has

also been impressing members of the British Computer Society.

They saw it in action on a Risc PC when the Society presented Softease with one of its prestigious awards for Information Technology for the Multimedia version of Talking TextEase. The gold medal was presented to Geoff Titmuss and Danny Young at a luncheon at the Cafe Royal in London.

Although there is now a Windows version of TextEase, this was not as advanced as the Acorn one at the time, so it was the RISC OS version which the Society saw in action. Danny Young, who is porting it to the PC, said that coding which Geoff Titmuss was able to complete for the Acorn in just hours could sometimes take days to be rewritten for Windows.

eMate for Acorns

Xemplar, which is now one of Acorn's most important customers, has been giving journalists a preview of its plans at its Cambridge headquarters. One of Xemplar's major new products is the eMate 300 portable, based on the Apple Newton and designed specifically for use in schools. Software to connect it to Acorn computers for easy data transfer is now being developed.

This is not intended to replace the Pocket Book which, Xemplar says, may be more suited for some users, particularly adults.

The Sunday Times has been making much of the fact that Xemplar normally supplies only the educational market, which includes the parents of pupils and students. It has been running a special offer to supply the machine to its readers at the retail price of £549 inclusive.

However, if any Eureka readers want to dabble with Apple technology, they should find a phone call direct to the Xemplar sales desk on 01223 724200 is all that is needed.

Advice To The Psion Love Lorn

Hello and welcome once again to the column for the diminutively computered amongst us. It was nice to see a few of you at Acorn World, to chat and answer Pocket Bookey Questions.

this mechanism yourself by opening the RS-232 serial port cover at the back

left of the Series 5 and gently pulling the lower half of the machine's casing just below the RS-232 inscription.

Toby Smith —a Palmtop computing freak since before it became fashionable —opens his postbag and offers some sympathetic help to the Psion 5 infatuated.

It would appear that the world has gone Psion 5 mad—I've been getting lots of questions about them, and they're beginning to take over the Club Committee.

I can't use the external sound recorder/player buttons.

Our next meeting is likely to be conducted by IrDA at this rate. Here are a few hints and tips for 5 owners from the postbag...

If you've password protected your Psion, or Owner Information has been set to be displayed at switch on, then Voice Memos cannot be kicked off by the external buttons as they will turn on the machine and then the password will kick in...

My stylus is jammed, what can I do?

It appears that some pens/styluses (styli?) may be jammed into the lock in mechanism so that they don't pop out easily. Apparently you can unlatch

To use Voice Memos with Password on, you have to do the following. Before closing down press the external record button until the machine bleeps (indicating ready). The Record application is launched but is labelled as 'Voice notes' in your

default folder. Now switch off. The machine will still respond to the external buttons to make recordings even with password protection or Owner Information enabled.

Can I browse the Series 5 ROM?

Browsing the ROM files on the S3/Pocket Books was moderately simple, and is similar on the Series 5. Firstly you must have both ‘Show hidden files’ and ‘Show ‘System’ folder’ on in your configuration. Then from the system screen bring up the File Browser window by pressing Ctrl-Tab instead of just Tab. Select the drive letter and select ‘Z’. You can now browse the machine’s ROM or exit from the browser to have the ROM on the system screen.

Psion 5 conversion software news

As previously reported in this column, Innovative Media Solutions are working on a complete Psion connection and transfer suite. Whilst obviously aimed at the lack of transfer for the Psion 5, it should also work fine on older models of either badge. Their development team had just received the protocol details from Psion at Acorn World, and I had a

quick look at the current state at the Club’s recent Motorcycle Museum show. Watch the press, or their web site, for further details.

Of Holsters and Holders

Many people admired my new Series 5 holster at Acorn World, and I must say that I’m rather happy with it, despite all the gags about ‘Bat Belt’ that it and my mobile phone collected.

It comes from Vega Holsters of Rochdale. They supply a vast array of cases, holsters and holders for Palmtop computes (including all the Psion range) and many mobile phones. Cases are available in normal saddle leather, antique look leather (very flash) in a choice of black, oxblood or tan, and in tough black cordura (like mine).

They also come in a variety of shapes, configurations and sizes from simple zip cases through belt holsters upto shoulder holsters. (though the gags likely from shoulder holsters might be just too much).

I plumped for a belt holster with interchangeable closures (flap and cord strap) and combined clip and

loop belt holder, all for comfortably below £30.

Phone for a catalogue and you too can look like a Wild West Cowboy shooting Psions at WinCE hustling types!

That's about all I've got time for (folks) this edition —keep your hints, tips, queries and questions rolling in through all the usual channels.

Toby Smith can be contacted by email to:

pbc@armclub.org.uk

or at the Club's new Freepost address:

FREEPOST "The ARM Club"

Vega Holsters

Supplier: Vega Holsters
Bamford Village Center
Martlett Avenue
Rochdale
OL11 5QY
Tel: 01706 44177
Fax: 01706 44435
Web:
<http://www.vega-holsters.com/>

...And if you don't like the

Wyatt Earp look...

Dixons sell a leather wallet for holding the PB/3A along with a mobile phone such as those from Nokia, Panasonic, Motorola, Sony, Orbital, Alcatel, Ericsson, Bosch, NEC and Dancall digital phones plus a pen holder —and all for £14.99.

It's made by Corniche Leather, under the product reference of CL621, and goes by the name of the Mobile Business Case.

The phone holder could just as easily hold a pair of glasses. I purchased one and have found it invaluable.

It beats having two holsters on my belt —which used to make me feel like Wyatt Earp.

I recommend it for those of you who use a mobile phone and a Pocket Book or Psion Series 3.

Ralph Sillett

Using The Toolbox From BASIC

Having the bare bones of a system to display events, we now need to be able to create them and scroll through events in a given day.

Clicking on New on the main diary window should result in a New event

The methods constants have been expanded to the following:

REM Set up constants for methods used

window_settitle%=11

gadget_getflags%=64

In the fourth part of his series, Mark Smith continues his tutorial on writing a Toolbox application in BASIC by showing how to add and scroll through diary entries.

window being displayed. This is the window that we created in the last issue, with the title modified to read Diary: New event and all the fields set to default values. The New action button is set to display the Edit window and we can modify attributes of that window by making the Toolbox generate an event before it is shown. The New button will become the parent component of that window, so it is possible to tell whether the user clicked on New or Edit.

Before we start the main bulk of the work, there are some items to be added to the initialisation code that we will use later on:

gadget_setflags%=65

optionbutton_setstate%=196

optionbutton_getstate%=197

radiobutton_setstate%=388

radiobutton_getstate%=389

displayfield_setvalue%=448

writablefield_setvalue%=512

writablefield_getvalue%=513

numberrange_setvalue%=832

numberrange_getvalue%=833

A set of constants needs to be defined for the component IDs in the event editor window:

edit_eventname%=0

edit_oneoff%=&101

edit_daily%=&102

edit_weekly%=&103
 edit_monthly%=&104
 edit_annually%=&105
 edit_indefinitely%=&106
 edit_from%=&200
 edit_fromdayl%=&201
 edit_fromday%=&202
 edit_frommonthl%=&203
 edit_frommonth%=&204
 edit_fromyearl%=&205
 edit_fromyear%=&206
 edit_to%=&300
 edit_todayl%=&301
 edit_today%=&302
 edit_tomonthl%=&303
 edit_tomonth%=&304
 edit_toyearl%=&305
 edit_toyear%=&306

Two new miscellaneous constants define the titles used for the editor window:

neweventtitle\$="Diary: New event"
 editeventtitle\$="Diary: Edit event"

Finally, there are some variable initialisations to be added to the end of the initialisation procedure:

REM Initialise global variables
 diary_objectid%=0 : REM Will hold
 object ID of main diary window

DaysPassed%=0 : REM Days
 passed since start of 1900
 DayWeek%=0 : REM Day of the
 week
 DayMonth%=0 : REM Day of the
 month
 MonthYear%=0 : REM Current
 month
 Year%=0 : REM Current year
 PreviousEvent%=0 : REM Number
 of today's previous event (or 0)
 NextEvent%=0 : REM Number of
 today's next event (or 0)
 CurrentEvent%=0 : REM Current
 today's event number
 EditEvent%=0 : REM Event number
 currently being edited

A new memory block is also defined at the start of the program for holding a temporary 5 byte time value. This will be used for time format conversions:

DIM TempTimeBlock% 5

The easiest method of setting up the
 edit window is to define a new
 toolbox event which will be raised
 before the editor window is shown.
 This is defined in the main properties
 dialogue for the editor window as
 'Deliver event before showing'. I

have defined Other event &2 for this purpose. In order to recognise this event, PROCtoolbox requires the addition of the following line:

```
WHEN 2:PROCedit_showing
```

PROCedit_showing

When this new event is raised, we need to work out whether the user clicked on Edit or New and set up the window accordingly. For the purposes of this issue we want to be able to create events, the edit setup will be added later:

```
DEFPROCedit_showing
```

```
    REM Prepare edit event window
    depending on whether
```

```
    REM The user has clicked Edit or
    New
```

```
CASE IDs%!12 OF
```

```
    WHEN diary_editevent%
```

```
        REM Edit setup will be added here
```

```
    WHEN diary_newevent%
```

```
        REM Change the title
```

```
        SYS "Toolbox_ObjectMiscOp",,IDs
```

```
        %!16,window_settitle%,neweventtitle$
```

```
        REM Blank the event name field
```

```
        SYS "Toolbox_ObjectMiscOp",,IDs
```

```
        %!16,writablefield_setvalue%,edit_ev
        entname%, ""
```

```
        REM Set repeating option to one
```

```
        off, deselect and fade Indefinitely
```

```
        SYS "Toolbox_ObjectMiscOp",,IDs
```

```
        %!16,radiobutton_setstate%,edit_on
        eoff%,1
```

```
        SYS "Toolbox_ObjectMiscOp",,IDs
```

```
        %!16,optionbutton_setstate%,edit_in
        definitely%,0
```

```
        PROCfade(IDs%!16,edit_indefinitely
        %)
```

```
        REM Set From to current date
```

```
        SYS "Toolbox_ObjectMiscOp",,IDs
```

```
        %!16,numberrange_setvalue%,edit_f
        romday%,DayMonth%
```

```
        SYS "Toolbox_ObjectMiscOp",,IDs
```

```
        %!16,numberrange_setvalue%,edit_f
        rommonth%,MonthYear%
```

```
        SYS "Toolbox_ObjectMiscOp",,IDs%!16,numberrange_setvalue%,edit_fro
```

```
        myear%,Year%
```

```
        REM Set To to current date and
```

```
        fade
```

```
        SYS "Toolbox_ObjectMiscOp",,IDs
```

```
        %!16,numberrange_setvalue%,edit_t
```

```

oday%,DayMonth%
  PROCfade(IDs%!16,edit_todayl%)
  PROCfade(IDs%!16,edit_today%)
  SYS "Toolbox_ObjectMiscOp",,IDs
%!16,numberrange_setvalue%,edit_t
omonth%,MonthYear%
  PROCfade(IDs%!16,edit_tomonthl
%)
  PROCfade(IDs%!16,edit_tomonth
%)
  SYS "Toolbox_ObjectMiscOp",,IDs
%!16,numberrange_setvalue%,edit_t
oyear%,Year%
  PROCfade(IDs%!16,edit_toyearl%)
  PROCfade(IDs%!16,edit_toyear%)
  PROCfade(IDs%!16,edit_to%)

  REM Set EditEvent%=0 to indicate
new event
  EditEvent%=0

  ENDCASE

ENDPROC

```

The parent component ID (IDs%!12) is used to decide whether the user clicked on Edit or New. This should have the value of either diary_newevent% or diary_editevent%. In the new event case, the title is set to 'Diary: New event', the event name is set to

nothing, the repeating option to one off, indefinitely is deselected and faded, the To and From dates set to the date currently being displayed and the To date group faded, since the current repeating option is one off.

EditEvent% is set to 0 to indicate that a new diary event is being created, rather than one being edited.

Fading and unfading gadgets

Having set up the editor window, the indefinitely option and To date group need to be faded and unfaded dependent on the status of the repeating options and the indefinitely option. A one off event, by definition, may not be indefinite nor does it require an end date. An indefinitely repeating option has no end date.

- If the repeating option is set to one off, the indefinitely option and To date group are both faded, otherwise the indefinitely option is unfaded.
- If the repeating option is not set to one off and the indefinitely option is ticked, the To date group is faded.
- If the repeating option is not set to one off and the indefinitely option is

not ticked, the To group is unfaded.

Three events need to be defined as follows:

One off has been selected - 3
A repeating option has been selected - 4
The indefinitely option has changed state - 5

As usual, the event numbers are defined in the ResEd properties dialogue for the radio buttons and option button. The Deliver event option for all buttons in the Repeating group should be set to Other, with event &3 for the One off button, &5 for the Indefinitely button and &4 for all the others.

Again, PROCtoolbox requires cases for each of the new events:

WHEN 3:PROCOneoffevent
WHEN 4:PROCRepeatingevent
WHEN 5:PROCIndefinitechange

PROCOneoffevent needs to fade the indefinitely option and all gadgets in the To date group:

DEFPROCOneoffevent

REM For a one off event, fade indefinitely option and end date

REM Fade Indefinitely Option
PROCfade(IDs%!16,edit_indefinitel
y%)

REM Fade To group
PROCfade(IDs%!16,edit_todayl%)
PROCfade(IDs%!16,edit_today%)
PROCfade(IDs%!16,edit_tomonthl
%)
PROCfade(IDs%!16,edit_tomonth%)
PROCfade(IDs%!16,edit_toyearl%)
PROCfade(IDs%!16,edit_toyear%)
PROCfade(IDs%!16,edit_to%)

ENDPROC

PROCRepeating event needs to unfade the indefinitely option and unfade the To gadget group if indefinitely is not ticked.

DEFPROCRepeatingevent

REM For a repeating event unfade indefinitely option

REM and unfade end date if indefinitely is not selected

LOCAL state%

REM Unfade Indefinitely Option

PROCunfade(IDs%!16,edit_indefinitely%)

REM Check indefinitely option
SYS "Toolbox_ObjectMiscOp",IDs%!16,optionbutton_getstate%,edit_indefinitely% TO state%

IF state%=0 THEN

REM Unfade To group
PROCunfade(IDs%!16,edit_todayl%)
PROCunfade(IDs%!16,edit_today%)
PROCunfade(IDs%!16,edit_tomonthl%)
PROCunfade(IDs%!16,edit_tomonth%)
PROCunfade(IDs%!16,edit_toyearl%)
PROCunfade(IDs%!16,edit_toyear%)
PROCunfade(IDs%!16,edit_to%)

ENDIF

ENDPROC

PROCindefinitechange should unfade the To gadget group if indefinite is being unticked, or fade it otherwise.

DEFPROCindefinitechange

IF Block%!16=0 THEN

REM Indefinitely has been deselected - Unfade To Group
PROCunfade(IDs%!16,edit_todayl%)
PROCunfade(IDs%!16,edit_today%)
PROCunfade(IDs%!16,edit_tomonthl%)
PROCunfade(IDs%!16,edit_tomonth%)
PROCunfade(IDs%!16,edit_toyearl%)
PROCunfade(IDs%!16,edit_toyear%)
PROCunfade(IDs%!16,edit_to%)

ELSE

REM Indefinitely has been selected - Fade To Group
PROCfade(IDs%!16,edit_todayl%)
PROCfade(IDs%!16,edit_today%)
PROCfade(IDs%!16,edit_tomonthl%)
PROCfade(IDs%!16,edit_tomonth%)
PROCfade(IDs%!16,edit_toyearl%)
PROCfade(IDs%!16,edit_toyear%)

be amended to respond to the new event:

```
WHEN 6:PROCedit_ok
```

The procedure to handle this event is as follows. In order to work out a date as number of days passed since the start of 1900, we need to know the number of days passed since the start of the year. We will

```
PROCfade(IDs%!16,edit_to%)
```

```
ENDIF
```

```
ENDPROC
```

Editor window OK event

The next step is to define a toolbox event which will be generated when the users click on the OK button in the editor window. This will take the definition from the contents of the dialogue and use it to update or create the diary event.

Toolbox event 6 is to be defined as the event that will be raised when the user clicks on OK. As always this is set in the properties dialogue for the action button. PROCtoolbox also needs to

also need the day of the week for the start date of weekly repeating events. The easiest way to work that out is to create an ordinals block with the date (and time set to 00:00:00), convert to 5 byte time format and then convert back to ordinals which will include additional information such as day of the week and number of days since the start of the year.

```
DEFPROCedit_ok
```

```
REM Declare local variables
```

```
LOCAL Option%,FromDay%,From  
Month%,FromYear%,ToDay%,ToMon  
th%,ToYear%
```

```
REM If a new event is being created,  
add a new event
```

<pre> IF EditEvent%=0 THEN Events%+=1 EditEvent%=Events% ENDIF REM Record event description REM Wimp poll block is used as a temporary buffer for the description SYS "Toolbox_ObjectMiscOp",IDs %!16,writablefield_getvalue%,edit_e ventname%,Block%,256 TO ,,,Descr ipt\$(EditEvent%) REM Get repeating option REM Component ID of selected option in radio group is returned in R1 SYS "Toolbox_ObjectMiscOp",IDs% !16,radiobutton_getstate%,edit_oneo ff% TO ,Option% REM Read start date and set up event accordingly SYS "Toolbox_ObjectMiscOp",IDs %!16,numberrange_getvalue%,edit_f romday% TO FromDay% SYS "Toolbox_ObjectMiscOp",IDs %!16,numberrange_getvalue%,edit_f rommonth% TO FromMonth% SYS "Toolbox_ObjectMiscOp",IDs %!16,numberrange_getvalue%,edit_f romyear% TO FromYear% !OrdBlock%=0 </pre>	<pre> OrdBlock%!4=0 OrdBlock%!8=0 OrdBlock%!12=0 OrdBlock%!16=FromDay% OrdBlock%!20=FromMonth% OrdBlock%!24=FromYear% SYS "Territory_ConvertOrdinalsToTi me",-1,TempTimeBlock%,OrdBlock% SYS "Territory_ConvertTimeToOrdin als",-1,TempTimeBlock%,OrdBlock% Start%(EditEvent%)=FNdayssince1 900(OrdBlock%) REM Send end date and other fields depending on whether event REM is one off and whether indefinitely flag is set CASE Option% OF WHEN edit_oneoff% End%(EditEvent%)=Start%(EditEv ent%) : REM Single day event WkDay%(EditEvent%)=0 : REM Any day of week Day%(EditEvent%)=0 : REM Any day of month Month%(EditEvent%)=0 : REM Any month WHEN edit_daily% </pre>
---	---

WkDay%(EditEvent%)=0 : REM
Any day of week

Day%(EditEvent%)=0 : REM Any
day of month

Month%(EditEvent%)=0 : REM Any
month

WHEN edit_weekly%

WkDay%(EditEvent%)=OrdBlock
%!28 : REM Particular weekday

Day%(EditEvent%)=0 : REM Any
day of month

Month%(EditEvent%)=0 : REM
Any month

WHEN edit_monthly%

WkDay%(EditEvent%)=0 : REM
Any day of week

Day%(EditEvent%)=FromDay% :
REM Particular day of month

Month%(EditEvent%)=0 : REM Any
month

WHEN edit_annually%

WkDay%(EditEvent%)=0 : REM
Any day of week

Day%(EditEvent%)=FromDay%
: REM Particular day of month

Month%(EditEvent%)=FromMonth
% : REM Particular month

ENDCASE

REM If event is repeating, we need
to set an end date

IF Option%<>edit_oneoff% THEN

REM Read Indefinitely Option
Status

SYS "Toolbox_ObjectMiscOp",,ID
%!16,optionbutton_getstate%,edit_in
definitely% TO state%

IF state%=1 THEN

REM If indefinitely flag is set, end
date is maximum it is

REM possible to store

End%(EditEvent%)=&7FFFFFFF

ELSE

REM Otherwise, read end date
and set up end accordingly

SYS "Toolbox_ObjectMiscOp",,ID
s%!16,numberrange_getvalue%,edit
_today% TO ToDay%

SYS "Toolbox_ObjectMiscOp",,ID
s%!16,numberrange_getvalue%,edit
_tomonth% TO ToMonth%

SYS "Toolbox_ObjectMiscOp",,ID
s%!16,numberrange_getvalue%,edit
_toyear% TO ToYear%

```

!OrdBlock%=0
OrdBlock%!4=0
OrdBlock%!8=0
OrdBlock%!12=0
OrdBlock%!16=ToDay%
OrdBlock%!20=ToMonth%
OrdBlock%!24=ToYear%
SYS "Territory_ConvertOrdinalsTo
Time",-1,TempTimeBlock%,OrdBlock%
SYS "Territory_ConvertTimeToO
rdinals",-1,TempTimeBlock%,OrdBlo
ck%
End%(EditEvent%)=FNdayssince
1900(OrdBlock%)
ENDIF
ENDIF

REM Update main diary display to
reflect any visible changes
PROCdiary_updatedisplay

ENDPROC

```

FNdayssince1900 has been taken out of PROCdiary_updatedisplay. PROCdiary_updatedisplay now calls FNdayssince1900.

```

DEFFNdayssince1900(OrdBlock%)

REM Work out number of days since

```

```

start of 1900 from Ordinals
REM Block
LOCAL YS1900%,DaysPassed%

REM Get days since 1st Jan 1900
REM 365*Whole years since
1900+Leap years+Days since start
year
YS1900%=OrdBlock%!24-1900
DaysPassed%=365*YS1900%+((
YS1900%+3) DIV 4)+OrdBlock%!32
REM Correct for 2100 and 2200
not being leap years
IF YS1900%>200 THEN
DaysPassed%-=1
IF YS1900%>300 THEN DaysPass
ed%-=1

=DaysPassed%

```

Scrolling through days and events

The final task for this issue is to add code that handles clicks on the adjuster arrows in the main diary display for the date and events scheduled for a given day.

It is not possible to get adjuster arrows to raise user defined events, so we have to trap the standard toolbox adjuster_clicked event (&8288C) and look at the object and component IDs to work out which one was clicked on.

PROCtoolbox should be modified with the following line:

WHEN &8288C:PROCadjuster_clicked

Diary event numbers are held for the previous, current and next events for the currently displayed day, each of which may be 0 if there isn't one (i.e. next event number is 0 if the last event is being displayed, previous event is 0 if the first event is being displayed and all three are 0 if there are no events scheduled for the day being displayed).

When moving on to the next event, the current event becomes the previous and the next event becomes the current one. A new next event is searched for. If none is found, the next event adjuster arrow is faded and the next event is set to 0. The reverse happens when the user clicks on previous event.

When moving on to the next day, the 5 byte time value pointed to by TimeBlock% must be incremented by the number of centiseconds in 24 hours. This works out at 8640000 or &83D600. Since this is divisible by 256 and it is much easier to deal with

4 byte integers than it is to deal with 5 byte integers, we can increment the top 4 bytes by &83D6. Likewise, when the user clicks on the adjuster arrow to move back a day, we can subtract &83D6 from the top 4 bytes of the time. Having done this, a call to PROCdiary_updatedisplay will ensure that the correct date is displayed, with the first event if any are scheduled for that day.

DEFPROCadjuster_clicked

CASE IDs%!16 OF

WHEN diary_objectid%

CASE IDs%!20 OF

REM Click on previous event
adjuster

WHEN diary_todaylastevent%

REM New next event is old current
event

NextEvent%=CurrentEvent%

PROCunfade(diary_objectid%,diary_todaynextevent%)

REM New current event is old
previous event

CurrentEvent%=PreviousEvent%

```

SYS "Toolbox_ObjectMiscOp",,di
ary_objectid%,displayfield_setvalue
%,diary_todayevent%,Descript$(Curr
entEvent%)

```

```

REM Search for a previous event
PreviousEvent%=0
A%=CurrentEvent%-1
WHILE (A%>0) AND (PreviousE
vent%=0)
    IF DaysPassed%>=Start%(A%
) AND DaysPassed%<=End%(A%)
THEN
    IF WkDay%(A%)=0 OR
WkDay%(A%)=DayWeek% THEN
        IF Day%(A%)=0 OR Day%(
A%)=DayMonth% THEN
            IF Month%(A%)=0 OR
Month%(A%)=MonthYear% THEN
                PreviousEvent%=A%
            ENDIF
        ENDIF
    ENDIF
    A%-=1
ENDWHILE

```

```

REM If we've found a previous
event, unfade to previous
REM event button. Otherwise
fade it.

```

```

IF PreviousEvent%<>0 THEN

```

```

PROCunfade(diary_objectid%,
diary_todaylastevent%)

```

```

ELSE

```

```

    PROCfade(diary_objectid%,di
ary_todaylastevent%)

```

```

ENDIF

```

```

REM Click on next event adjuster
WHEN diary_todaynextevent%

```

```

REM New previous event is old
current event

```

```

    PreviousEvent%=CurrentEvent%
    PROCunfade(diary_objectid%,dia
ry_todaylastevent%)

```

```

REM New current event is old next
event

```

```

    CurrentEvent%=NextEvent%
    SYS "Toolbox_ObjectMiscOp",,di
ary_objectid%,displayfield_setvalue
%,diary_todayevent%,Descript$(Curr
entEvent%)

```

```

REM Search for a next event

```

```

NextEvent%=0

```

```

A%=CurrentEvent%+1

```

```

WHILE (A%<=Events%) AND
(NextEvent%=0)

```

```

    IF DaysPassed%>=Start%(A%)
AND DaysPassed%<=End%(A%)
THEN

```

```

        IF WkDay%(A%)=0 OR

```

```

WkDay%(A%)=DayWeek% THEN
    IF Day%(A%)=0 OR
Day%(A%)=DayMonth% THEN
    IF Month%(A%)=0 OR
Month%(A%)=MonthYear% THEN
        NextEvent%=A%
    ENDIF
ENDIF
ENDIF
ENDIF
A%+=1
ENDWHILE

    REM If we've found a next event,
unfade to next
    REM event button. Otherwise fade it.

    IF NextEvent%<>0 THEN
        PROCunfade(diary_objectid%,d
iary_toddaynextevent%)
    ELSE
        PROCfade(diary_objectid%,dia
ry_toddaynextevent%)
    ENDIF

    REM Click on day decrement
adjuster
    WHEN diary_yesterday%

    REM Decrement top 4 bytes of
current time by number of
    REM centiseconds in a day
divided by 256

```

```

TimeBlock%!1=TimeBlock%!1-&8
3D6

    REM Update display with new day
PROCdiary_updatedisplay

    REM Click on day increment
adjuster
    WHEN diary_tommorrow%

    REM Increment top 4 bytes of
current time by number of
    REM centiseconds in a day
divided by 256
    TimeBlock%!1=TimeBlock%!1+&8
3D6

    REM Update display with new day
PROCdiary_updatedisplay

    ENDCASE

    ENDCASE

    ENDPROC

```

It is now possible to add and display events in the diary.

In the next issue, we'll add functionality to edit and delete existing events and then look at displaying forthcoming events.

The Editor's view

by Paul Beverley

Being allowed to bat second gives me the advantage of being able to compare my magazine with RISC User. I like to think that the two magazines are complementary, so as I compare them, I'm certainly not

example, Archive contained 62,000 words. (To give you an idea what this means, I estimate that Eureka issue 24 contains about 22,000 words.) So, Archive is not exactly a 'light read'.

- Archive is written, not by professional journalists, but by enthusiasts such as yourselves, i.e. the

In the second of our series on Acorn magazines, we get the views of the Editor and a regular reader of Archive, from Norwich Computer Services

trying to rubbish the opposition, but rather to highlight our particular strengths — well, to highlight Archive's strengths, anyway!

- Archive has stuck with the more traditional A5 format, and does not use colour apart, from the cover, and so can look a little dull by comparison.

- Archive is virtually the same price (£25 instead of £24.50), but you get twelve issues a year, not ten, and it's 80 or 96 pages (A5) each month as against 64 (B4). Last month, for

articles are written for love, not money. There are pluses and minuses to that, as you can imagine! However, variety is assured when, as in the last issue, there are contributions, be they large or small, from 40 different people.

- Archive has a similar mix of technical articles, reviews, news, hints & tips, small ads, etc, but I think it has a more of an 'interactive' feel to it. For example, a good deal of space is given towards readers' comments in a Comment Column and readers' questions in the 'Help!!! Column'

where we get questions of the ‘How can I...?’ or ‘Where can I get...?’ variety. On top of that, there are a number of ‘eclectic’ columns where someone acts as the ‘centre for information interchange’ about a particular topic, e.g. ‘Printers and Printing’ and ‘PC Bits’.

When Peter asked me to write this article, he said he wanted to know about our aims, objectives and future plans. Well, I think the most important aspect of Archive is that it is a place where you can find information —how things work, what products are available, what are Acorn up to, how to upgrade your computer, etc —indeed anything relating to Acorn computers.

In fact, the contents of the past issues of Archive represent such a massive bank of information that we’ve put it all onto a CD. We’ve also provided applications so that you can search for whatever topic you have in mind. At £12, it’s a lot cheaper than buying the back issues —and it takes up a lot less space.

Our other watchword is learning. Although there’s a fair amount of



Paul Beverley

heavy technical material in each issue, a lot of our readers wouldn’t count themselves as ‘techies’. They want help with the everyday nitty gritty of using their computers. However, most of them are also keen to learn; so that they may, in future, know why something has gone wrong, and not just how to fix it. We therefore provide articles at various different levels so that everyone can feel, after reading every issue of Archive, that they are older and wiser as a result.

If any ARM Club member, who has never subscribed before, would like to give Archive a try, either send us £4 and we’ll send you the next four issues as a trial, or take out a year’s subscription for £25, and we’ll give you a free copy of the Archive CD.

A reader's view
by Simon Burrows

The first time I read a copy of Archive magazine, back in 1990, I was astonished at the amount of information contained within its pages.

At first sight, the magazine looked less attractive than its commercial rivals, with a simple cover and straight text format with few illustrations. The thing which set Archive apart was the fact that it was written by enthusiasts and thus was a mine of information of interest to enthusiasts. So much so, I must admit, that I kept my enthusiasm for Archive quiet in order to appear like a fount of Acorn information when talking to friends and other Acorn users!

Over the years, the format of Archive has remained fairly constant—a sign that it serves its purpose and does not need tinkering with. Archive's appearance is, admittedly, simple compared with the other professional magazines but this has the advantage of allowing more effort to be put into the content and also means that Archive can contain more

information and be quicker in getting the latest news to its readers.

A typical issue consists of approximately 80-100 A5 pages, with two column text format and a generous sprinkling of screenshots and other illustrations. All of the articles are written by readers or members of staff at Norwich Computer Services, publishers of the magazine.

Articles are written on a voluntary basis, with no payment for the articles. The maximum reward for having an article published is a 'free' review copy of the product covered in the article.

Competitive prices

The editor and publisher of Archive, Paul Beverley, has produced the magazine since 1987 alongside running Norwich Computer Services, a dedicated Acorn dealership. The majority of products mentioned or reviewed in the magazine are available from NCS, usually at very competitive prices. However the fact that reviews are written by readers increases their independence.

One of the best features of Archive over the years has been its speed in publishing the latest Acorn news, the most memorable occasion being the launch of the Risc PC. Knowledgeable readers are invited to attend press previews and give ordinary people's views of the latest product.

Regular columns

Archive has a number of regular columns including Products Available, Comment Column, Help!!!, Hints & Tips, Product News, Gerald's Column, Learner's Column and several other regular pages. One unusual column is nothing to do with computers but instead about the Christian faith, provoking a fair amount of discussion (fulfilling its purpose!).

The magazine has the feel of a user group since all of the material is submitted by readers, in a similar way to Eureka. A magazine disc is available by separate subscription, or through buying individual discs. It contains programs and data supplied by readers, applications they have written and files to accompany articles in the magazine. These can

also be downloaded, without charge, from one of Archive's Web sites.

I find it difficult to summarise Archive in an article such as this, because of its unique feel and style, and the wealth of information contained within its pages. If I was stuck on the proverbial desert island, a subscription to Archive would not be a luxury but a necessity. I wonder what the subscription rate would be..?

Archive

Price: £25 per year (UK)

Magazine disc £20 per year (UK)

Overseas rates on request.

Supplier: Norwich Computer

Services

96a Vauxhall Street

Norwich NR2 2SD

Tel: 01603 766592

Fax: 01603 764011

Email: sales.ncs@paston.co.uk

Web:

www.cybervillage.co.uk/acorn/archive

Web (for monthly program discs):

www.paston.co.uk/ncs

***For special subscription offer
see page 49.***

I Hate Computers

How many times have you heard “I hate computers” from friends, relatives or colleagues?

These are the same people who will happily use a calculator (computer), set the microwave control panel

Train spotter:

That is a 4-6-2 A3 Gresley Pacific with internal steam superheaters. “Is it??? WOW!”

Coach spotter: That is a Duple bodied 52-seater with an eight litre

No, this isn't the dark and shameful secret of a hitherto popular Eureka contributor. Geoff Lane cautions against the narrow-mindedness of some enthusiasts.

(computer) to defrost and reheat their dinner, set the control panel (computer) of their video to record TV programmes in their absence, set the control panel (computer) of their CD player to play tracks in a preferred order and set the TV timer (computer) to switch off if they fall asleep while watching the late night movie. *But*, these people hate computers.

Computer enthusiasts are mentioned in the same breath as train, coach and plane spotters (did two of those when I was younger). Why is this? Could the following descriptions by other hobby enthusiasts offer a clue?

turbocharged Cummins diesel engine. “Wake me up when he's finished. zzzzzzzz”

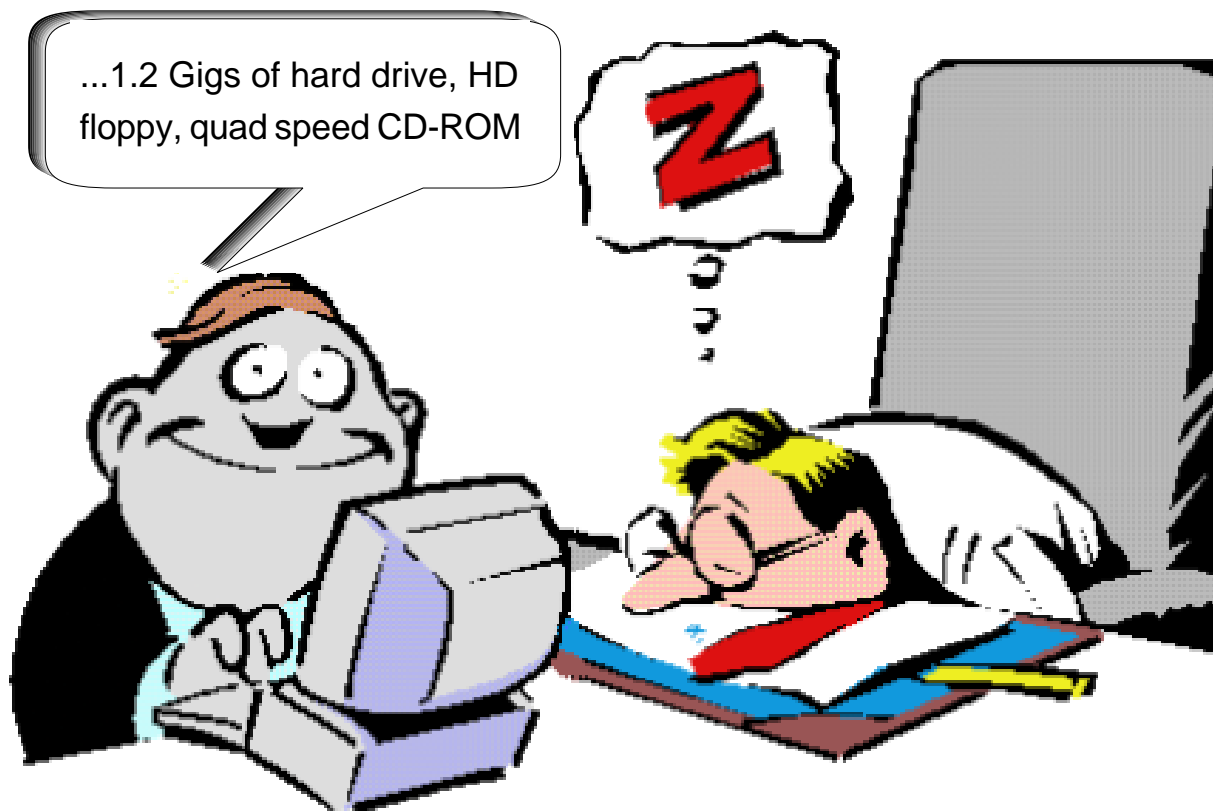
Plane spotter:

That is a 1962 707 with four Pratt & Whitney engines each developing a thrust of 50,000lbs. (Yawn)

Now read this carefully and be honest. Have you ever spoken like this to someone who doesn't understand computers?

Computer enthusiast:

That is a Packard Bell with 16 Megs of RAM, 2 Megs of ROM, 2 Megs of VDRAM, [*Hope that's not catching, Ed*]



512K of Pipeline Burst Cache, upgradeable motherboard, 1.2 Gigs of hard drive, HD floppy, quad speed CD-ROM and a 586 processor with a 133 MHz clock speed. ‘DO WHAT??? Could you run that past me again???’

The common denominator is: ‘It’s English, Jim, but not as we know it.’

Consider this alternative when explaining a computer to a newcomer. That computer is capable of running a program that will write your letters, check spellings, line up your margins, print in different styles and store them all for you. It will run another

program that will design and produce posters and magazines —great for children at school or adults running clubs. There are art programs that enable almost anyone to draw brilliant pictures, music programs to help you write and play music, educational programs to help with study from primary to university level and a whole host of games. In fact, a computer is capable of helping you to be more creative and enjoy more any current interest that you already have.

Given this explanation we might be a little less mystical to outsiders and encourage others to enjoy our hobby.

PublishArt 3 Illustrated Listing

PublishArt 3, a huge collection of DTP resources, including clip art and fonts, available on CD-ROM or discs (*reviewed in Eureka 22*) has been widely welcomed for its size and range. But these have caused users some problems.

Now there is another solution. Registered users of PublishArt 3 can get a printed catalogue of black and white thumbnail images from Flipside Web Design of Totnes, Devon, for a modest £8 inclusive.

The 'missing' illustrations of the graphics in Smart DTP's PublishArt 3 collection are now available. Peter Jennings has been browsing through the printouts.

The main criticisms have been the collection's lack of a printed catalogue and the meaningless numbered file names. Although, to make up for this, the collection comes with the offer of a 25% discount off the Mr Clippy clip art manager (full price £20), which has a viewer and can produce sheets of thumbnail images.

However, with more than 2,700 different images that's a lot of work, as well as the extra expense, although there are also some good PD programs that will also make the thumbnails.

The 'PublishArt 3 Printed List of All Artwork' has been supplied as 134 loose leaf A5 sheets (including a few examples and the odd page or filler of advertising here and there), punched at the top and held together with a couple of stationery tags. A bigger than expected demand is making it possible to improve this to a 52-page spiral-bound A5 booklet.

Clearly printed

The sheet are clearly headed with the directory name and contain 30 reproductions, each with its file name. They are clearly printed and, although a small number of darker images have lost some of the finer detail, it is easy

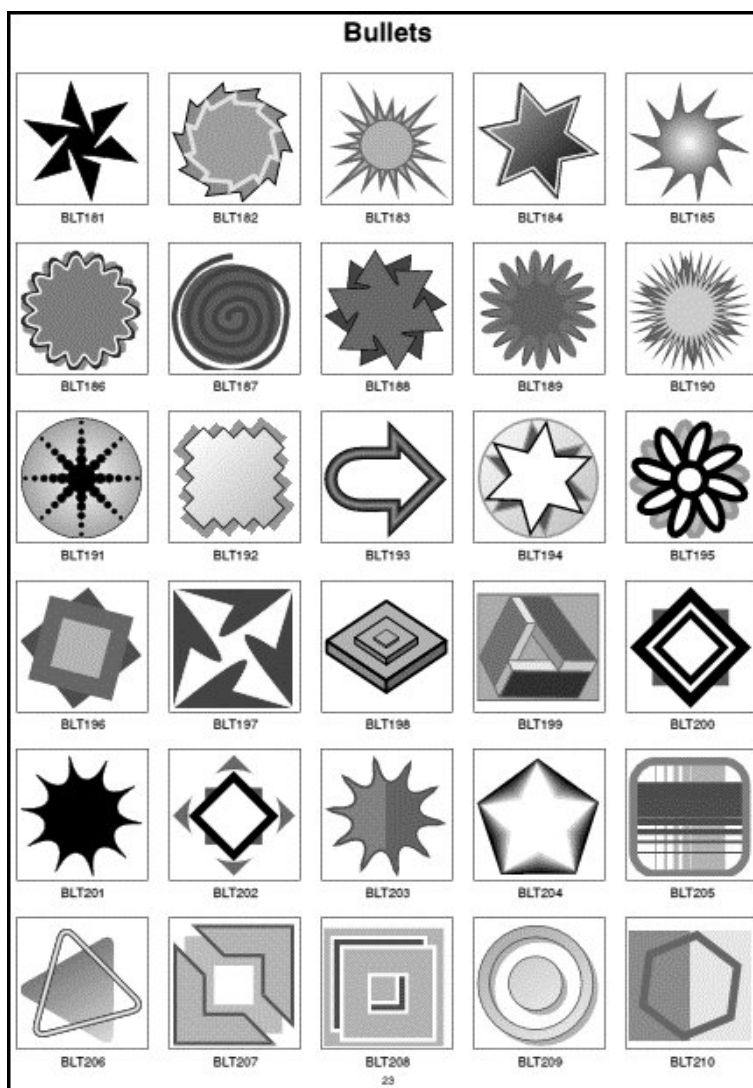
enough to identify the subjects and designs.

The catalogue includes the clip art, borders and Impression frames, and Colour Fun from the Smart DTP extras directory but not the SmartWorks, Electronic Circuit Developments or the iSV font pack.

If you use a colour printer you may just think it worth the effort to print your own sheets of thumbnails rather than buy them in monochrome but if you have only a black and white printer it doesn't seem worth the time and the cost of the paper, even using a free PD program, when the ready made catalogue is so cheap.

Discount

Club members can get it even cheaper, with a £1 discount (£7 including postage) from the full price by quoting reference 'PA3Eureka1' with their order.



**PublishArt 3 Printed List
of All Artwork**
(For registered PublishArt users only)

Price: £7 + £1 postage (no VAT)

Supplier: Flipside

The Tannery, Maudlin Road,
Totnes, Devon, TQ9 5EX

Tel: 01803 863863

Email: info@flipside.co.uk

Web: www.flipside.co.uk

The Demise Of DigiBank

January '98 saw the closure of The Digital DataBank BBS, one of the best known Bulletin Boards within Acorn circles.

went live on 14th December 1992. With everything switched on and ready to go John waited with bated breath for the phones to start ringing. What happened? Not a lot.

Geoff Lane mourns the passing of one of the most popular Bulletin Boards, after five years of good service to Acorn computer users.

DigiBank, as it was known to its users, was operated by fellow ARM Club member John Stonier who 'cut his teeth' so to speak on comms using the old British Telecom Prestel system way back in 1985.

John caught the 'comms bug' and thought to himself 'I can run a BBS'.

With his new found enthusiasm, John made various enquiries and decided to launch DigiBank. In 1992 he advertised DigiBank in Acorn User and, running his infant BBS on an A420 with a 105MB hard drive (expensive and considered big in 1992), two dedicated phone lines along with two 2,400 modems, John

The phone calls just trickled in. Fortunately BBSs are motivated by enthusiasm and not money therefore John did not panic.

One early user suggested that DigiBank's two 2,400 modems were a *big* mistake as they took too long to download files. John took this on board and almost immediately travelled to USRobotics' offices in Berkshire and bought two V-E-R-Y expensive new 14,400 modems (only the best for DigiBank).

Word of mouth then saw the steady growth of DigiBank's popularity until the boom years of 94/95 when with four dedicated phone lines more than

```
ARCbbs 32 (Local)
ARCbbs/RISC OS MultiUser BBS v1.64p32c (Compiled 11:11:03 Apr 19 1995)
[19200] Connection established on port 32
[ Line 1..... (01707) 329306 : 300-28800bps: v42/42bis : 23 Hours ]
[ Lines 2/384. (01707) 323531 : 300-14400bps: v42/42bis : 24 Hours ]

< D > < I > < G > < I > < T > < A > < L >

DigiBank BBS
(C) Kane

(The online meeting place for dedicated Acorn users)

+-----+
| (Melwyn-Hatfield Computer Club; Hertfordshire's No. 1 Acorn club, Melwyn) |
| (Garden City, Herts every alternate Friday. Mail John Stonier for info.) |
+-----+

Usernumber or username (NEW for new user):
```

400 calls were received each weekend with 50+ on each weekday —plenty of dosh for BT.

The operator of a BBS is known as a ‘Sysop’, short for systems operator, and John was an excellent Sysop always having time to ‘chat’ online with his many users and looking for ideas to make Digibank the one that set the standards by which all others are measured. In my opinion, John did just that as DigiBank was always mentioned in the same breath as that other ‘big player’ in Acorn comms circles, Arcade.

Unfortunately, to be a dedicated Sysop takes much time and money; BBSs don’t charge for their services and are maintained by their Sysop with occasional donations from users. It is almost impossible to have help running a BBS as any helpers have to live with the Sysop or close by to be of any use.

With the continued use of his computer John recently started to have setbacks; software and hardware problems and lack of time to sort them out so he had to make a decision, a difficult one by all

accounts. Time moves on and he took the decision to close DigiBank.

Although John leaves the Sysop scene his name will pop up regularly and his latest interest is 'Show organisation'. He arranged the Acorn South East Show in June 97 and at the time or writing is busy arranging the Acorn South West Show.

My daughter Claudia and I have had much enjoyment over the last two

years using DigiBank. We have learnt about the technicalities of comms and made many new friends. I will personally miss DigiBank but there are many Acorn BBSs out there that deserving our support and I for one will continue to use them.

To John: I, and on behalf of many Digibank users, will say 'thanks for the memories' the Acorn market has much to thank you for.

Write for Eureka

As a member of The ARM Club you are invited to join the team of writers who contribute to Eureka. Articles on all Acorn computer subjects are welcome and you will also have the chance to review software.

If you are interested, please send some details of yourself and your computer experience and list the topics you could write about. Say whether you can offer an article (or even a series of articles) and/or write software reviews on them. Reviews are sometimes required on non-computer subjects—we recently had write-ups on software for embroidery designs and Shakespeare plays in the same issue—so details of your job and hobbies are worth including.

Email The Editor at eureka@armclub.org.uk or write to the Club's new Freepost address: FREEPOST 'The ARM Club'.

• *ENJOY AN ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP* •

Secret Lives: Toby Smith

When I was first asked to write an article about Toby Smith, our Club membership secretary, I rubbed my hands with glee. However when I discovered that this was a reciprocal arrangement in return for

hour. There was always a mad rush to get in the queue for this due to the limited number of computers available, and Toby was generally to be found near the front of the queue.

Simon Burrows, who's known our membership secretary since boyhood, reveals Toby's plans for extending his youth by staying a perpetual student.

him writing an article about me, I decided that a little caution is in order!

My first recollection of Toby dates back to a time when he was wearing short trousers, possibly metaphorically but probably literally. The reason is that Toby and myself went to the same schools, albeit a couple of years apart. Toby lived in the village where I grew up and we both shared an interest in computers. A couple of eccentric computing teachers made a mark on both of us which did not wear off easily.

We used to have a 'computer club' which met at school during the lunch

My memory may be playing tricks, but the first computer I remember Toby owning was an A3000, of which he was very proud. Over the years he bought several upgrades before moving to the A4000 and, most recently, the Risc PC. Toby's mother is a teacher at an Acorn-based school and he sometimes gets called in to sort out technical problems.

For my sins, I was responsible for introducing Toby to Club A3000 (as this club was then called). Toby came along to the BBC Acorn User Show in 1991 as a visitor, and for a while remained on the periphery of the Club before finally joining the Club Committee. He took an active role

and has been our membership secretary for the past couple of years or more.

Toby quickly introduced his own style to the job of membership secretary, introducing a new membership database and volunteering other Committee members to assist with inputting new member details after each major show. His only difficulty in acting as membership secretary was long summer holidays in the depth of rural Wales when he was uncontactable. Incidentally, Toby shares his family interests in sailing and MG cars, and tells me that he sails around the Solent and Isle of Wight at least once a year.

After A levels, Toby studied for a degree in Computer Science & Artificial Intelligence at Birmingham University. When asked about the Artificial Intelligence, Toby admitted that the attraction is that it sounds good! While at University, Toby has played an active role in the Students' Guild (Union) and even spent last



summer travelling the country acting as their Schools' Liaison Officer.

Having joined the Committee graduate club in 1996, Toby announced the next step in his ambition to be a perpetual student by spending a year reading for a Masters degree, again at Birmingham. That year is fast coming to an end.

One amusing side of Toby was that, until a few months ago, he appeared

under the impression that he had invented the fairer sex. University life and his love of whisky and Edgbaston curry houses were contributing factors to Toby having less time to devote to acting as membership secretary (a job which he has performed extremely well).

Secret leaked

Towards the end of 1997 the secret leaked out when Toby decided to tie the knot and announce his engagement to Gill Adkins with the big day set for the autumn this year. This was the first engagement of a current Committee member which has meant some stick for them both. However this has been dealt with in typical good humour. Fortunately Gill is not averse to Toby's computing hobby and has even bought a secondhand A5000 (to understand how Toby thinks?!). She is now a regular participant in Club Committee events.

Toby is also very fond of his Pocket Book and contributes the regular Pocket Book Corner column in Eureka. He recently supplemented this with a Psion Series 5 which must mean that his pockets are very full! If

you've got any Pocket Book related questions, Toby is the man to ask and he's a regular helper at Club events including shows and open days.

Whenever there is an excuse for the younger Club Committee members to visit Birmingham (for example, for Committee meetings at Toby's house, or open days at the National Motorcycle Museum), Toby offers floor space for the night and organises a night out sampling the delights of Birmingham. I must admit that I've missed most of these but some of the stories are unrepeatable..

What about the future? Apart from his wedding, Toby's degree course comes to an end which means job-hunting — a challenging task when considering your fiancée's position at the same time as choosing between the different employers currently fighting for graduates. It'll be an interesting time for Toby & Gill!

All in all, it feels like I've known Toby for far too long but he's a good friend, does a lot for the Club and we're all delighted by the news of his forthcoming marriage. Good luck Toby and Gill!

Club Contact Changes

The ARM Club is, and always has been, run by a volunteer enthusiast Committee. We feel this is the best way to run a user group, even one this large, but it does present its problems.

The first is a recurring theme that there are relatively few people on the

has done sterling work for the Club since its start, decided to resign from the Committee due to his work pressures leaving him with little time for Club business.

Unfortunately, Nick was our quartermaster. He was store for most of the Club property, and also had the

Toby Smith, explains some important changes which have been made to the Club's address, phone and fax numbers. Mark Smith gives the details.

Committee compared to the workload of administering a Club of over 1,000 members with so many facets. We're also all generally busy in our 'other' walks of life, as well as our commitments to the Club, so none of us can devote huge amounts of time to the organisation, and it occasionally needs it. The second is that the people on the Committee do change — people come and go, and jobs swap around.

Unfortunately, round the time of Acorn World, we were hit by a combination of this. Nick Evans, who

Club address and phone line at his own private home. We've transferred both of these to Chris Price, in the expanded role of Secretary, but in the process, had to change address, phone number, stationary, leaflets and so on.

In order to avoid this huge change in future, we've investigated and acquired a series of redirectable contact methods.

Our email and web presence was already capable of this. The new Club telephone and fax numbers are of a special kind that can be redirected to

another telephone when we change secretary (or even when Chris goes on holiday), they do cost a little more to ring, but we felt the benefit of not constantly changing them outweighed this to members. Similarly our 'top level' FREEPOST address isn't tied to any part of the country, and if/when we change Secretary, the Royal Mail can redirect that without it needing to change too. It also has the benefit that sending stuff to the Club by post is free.

The new Freepost address is simply:

FREEPOST 'The ARM Club'

To go with the new Freepost address, we also have a new fax number:

07020 954018

This is a redirectable permanent number and costs 8.4p/min in the evening and at weekends and 14.2p/min the rest of the time.

The main phone number remains the same:

07010 709849

This is also a redirectable permanent number and costs 10p/min weekends and 20p/min weekday evenings. Evenings are the best time to try phoning.

Please note that this is manned by the Club Secretary who has a day job (that means it *won't* be answered during the day) and we cannot respond to ansaphone messages. Technical queries should not be directed to this number.

There is an alternative to the above fax and phone numbers which is an ordinary London number charged at standard rates:

0181 302 2316

Although cheaper to call, it is subject to change without notice and may not be answered for periods of some weeks on occasions when Chris goes away (during which times the redirectable phone number will be directed to somebody else).

Technical queries should not be directed by phone to this number (although tech help faxes may be).

The members' technical helpline remains the same:

0973 891330

This is a mobile which is looked after by various technically minded Committee members. It costs the same to call as the main Club number and is for technical help requests only.

Email addresses also remain as before, the main ones being:

info@armclub.org.uk
(general information)

support@armclub.org.uk
(members' technical help)

Remember that email is the best method of contact but don't send large attachments without prior arrangement.

Our web homepage is, as always, at:

<http://www.armclub.org.uk/>

The full list of Club Contacts can always be found on the last page of every issue of Eureka.

Members' Ads

For Sale

A5000 with FPA, 4/80MB, AKF18 monitor, keyboard, mouse, manuals, PCEmulator, £450. 210MB IDE, £50. Tel. 01344 411252 or roy.cotgrove@era.co.uk

Wanted

BBC Emulator pack SKB10.

Also advice on fitting a Connor IDE hard drive in an A5000 to replace or add to a smaller one.

Phone John Wade before noon or in evening or leave answerphone message: 01204 571836

Discounts

Discounts are available to Club members on the following products:

PublishArt 3 Illustrated Listing
see page 22.

Schedule+ organiser
see page 25

Archive magazine new subscriptions
see page 49

Don't miss!

The Kent Acorn Show

**Merton Court School
Sidcup, Kent**

**Sunday 1st March 1998
10am until 4pm***

Exhibitors include:

Acorn The ARM Club APDL Argonet Atomwide
Bajorasoft Cambridgeshire Software House Cherisha Software
Creative Curriculum Software CTA Direct
Cumana/Cannon Computing Eesox Sherston Spacetech
The Datastore Yellowstone

•Games arcade •Lucky dip
Tea, coffee and snacks

**Admission £1 to Club members — £1.50 to non-members.
Children under 16 admitted free if accompanied by an adult.**

**** The ARM Club's Annual General Meeting will take place at 4pm.
All members are invited to attend.***

Merton Court School is easily accessible from the M25 and A20.

The show will be signposted from the A20.

It can be reached from Sidcup BR Station for those using public transport.

Maps are available from the Club website at <http://www.armclub.org.uk/>



Early Learning Packs

Anyone who knows me will know that I'm a great admirer of anybody who can write decent software for early years children. This attitude is largely (some would say

hard disc's window (but what happens if you don't have a hard disc? Now there's a thought....) Interestingly the window that then presents itself also lets you see how

Schoolteacher Chris Price finds some 'truly wondrous' early years software which gets his pupils working hard and loving every minute of it.

“cynically”) provoked by the fact that I find precious little of it around that is actually worthwhile.

If that comment has made your heart sink then please *do* read on for the next sentence will read “but the ones that are good are truly wondrous” and the Matrix packs fall well into that category. They are effectively ‘matching and sorting’ packs of a very high standard and ideal for early learners, KS1 (and, as the pack leaflet points out, for special needs too).

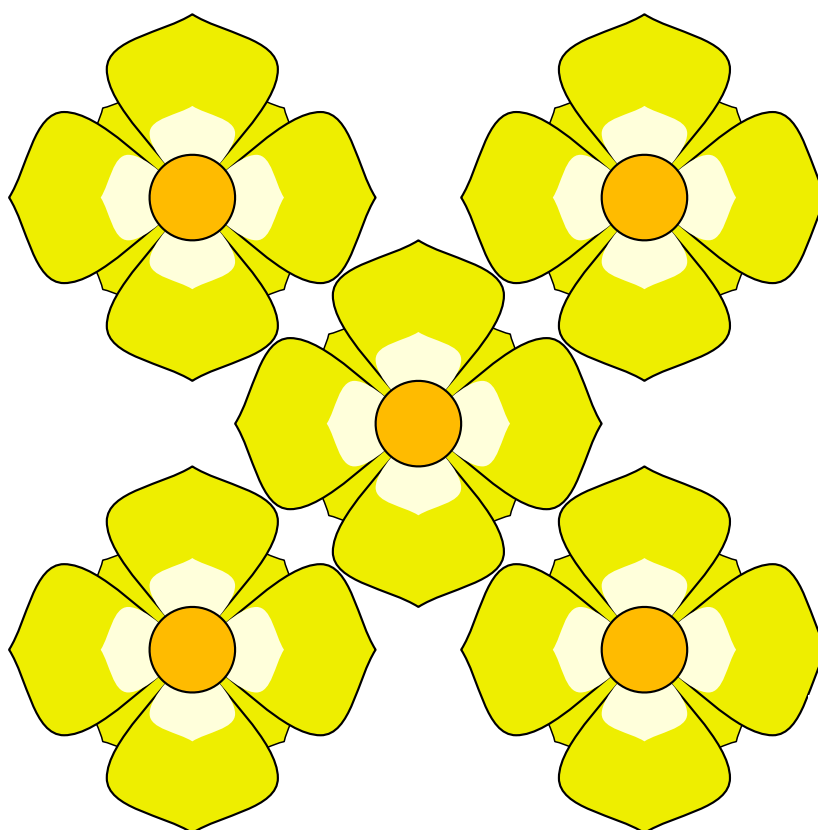
Installation is a doddle. Simply double clicking on the Matrix icon brings up a small window which invites you to write in your name and then drag the Matrix directory to your

much of the installation process has been completed.

Having installed the program on your hard disc and loaded it on the icon bar, you click on the icon there. In this case, this brings up a menu listing seven sets of games: Colours & Signs, Early Reading, Geography, Early Maths, Road Safety, Sequencing and Visual Perception.

The idea of each program, and its operation, are broadly similar so I shall concentrate on the first of these sets.

If you double click on the Colours & Shapes directory you are presented with three sub directories: Colour



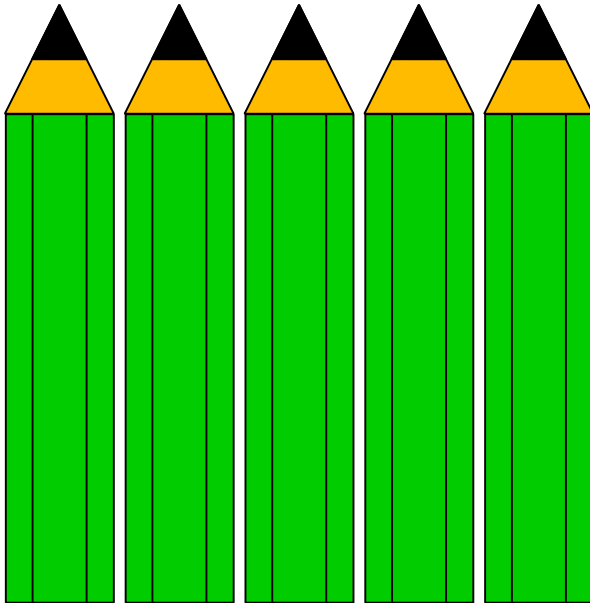
Five flowers

Matching, Colour & Shape Matching and Shape Matching. Clicking on Colour Matching brings up two final options three Colours or three Words to Colours. Feeling rather exhausted by the day's endeavours I could only cope with the three Colours option..

Double clicking on this brings up a simple screen. At the top are what I would describe as three flower shapes: red, yellow and blue. At the bottom is a shape in one of those colours. Your job is to drag that shape (and there are three different shapes at this level) into the square underneath the flower of the appropriate colour. Dragging it to the wrong colour

means that it simply bounces off. Dragging it to the right colour means that you are presented with another coloured shape... and so on until all the shapes are used up. When this happens a big star comes up in the middle of the screen, flashes and looks generally cheery.

The Early Maths programs work similarly. Looking at the Counting to five program, I am presented with the numbers 1 to 5 in boxes, a row of empty boxes below and a picture of a number of shells below that. Simply drag the picture with the shells to the box under the appropriate number and that's it!!



Five pencils

Every time you want to change the activity you simply click on the icon on the icon bar and the menu comes up. There is another button which enables you to go back to a directory and find a specific game.

There is also a useful 'Batch' facility which allows you to set up a set of tasks for a specific child once you have assigned that batch a user name.

Tricky task

Gripes? Well, I'm not sure how easily small children will take to the idea of dragging an object. It can be quite a tricky task. The menu on the icon bar also gives you the option to print a matrix —which in the case of this reviewer's copy failed spectacularly

and meant that the machine had to be re-booted!

However, I have tried this with two classes of three/four year olds who, despite the fact that it made them work quite hard, loved the program.

My review copy was version 1.01 but v.1.06 should now be available with cures for some bugs in the earlier version.

So, if you are a parent with small children, a teacher of early years children or a teacher of children with special needs, then send your order off now! This is one pack you won't ever regret buying.

Matrix

Price: £30 + £20 per pack (VAT extra but site licence is included).

There is a special offer of Matrix + Early Learning Packs 1 & 2 at £45.

Supplier: Le Computer

School Road, Rayne, Essex,
CM7 8SR

Tel: 01376 348886

Fax: 01376 349996

Email: info@lecomp.demon.co.uk

Web: www.lecomp.demon.co.uk

Clan Games

Being a member of the Clan, I received the August '97 Acorn CD-ROM and decided to take a look at what it had to offer in the way of games.

I was expecting the same demos that had been floating around the Internet and the StrongARM CD. Instead, I

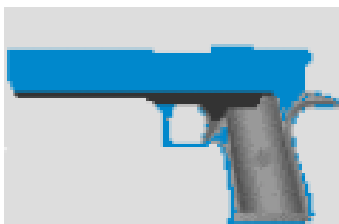
This is **not** the preview disc, an MPEG walkthrough or a collection of screenshots. This is the 'pre-pre release demo' and it actually works! I'm glad there are two 'pres' as there is some work to be done before this can be released but, that said, this should really be something.

Richard Harris unwraps his CD-ROM from the Clan and gives the demo games a work out.

was greeted with a filer window containing demos of Eternal Destiny, Iron Dignity, Emotions, Last Offence, Inferno and Wizard's Apprentice.

Eternal Destiny

Put your hands up. Who paid their fiver for a preview and order form for this game



months back? I know I did, and the release date has been put further and further back. I hadn't heard anything new for months, and I was about to write off when I found this.

I have played demos of Quake and Doom on a PC and there is no contest. Destiny is much smoother, has nicer graphics and runs on an Acorn. It is a true 3D game, meaning you can go upstairs, and have rooms above other rooms.

What aren't true 3D are the monsters. They are flat bitmaps, scaled for an illusion of depth. **It doesn't work.** Remember Wolfenstein? It reduces the game to the level of that, which is a great shame when it has the potential to be so much more.

This game probably wouldn't get much of a second look on the PC;

they've got plenty of first person shoot-em-ups. But for Acorn users, this is ground breaking technology, done on a much smaller budget than any PC titles.

It is, in its current state, lacking music or any good SFX. The game 'feels' solid, but without some decent eerie music it feels PD.

This is going to be huge on the Acorn once the few niggles have been sorted, and I have every faith in Robert and Robert's (Alcock and Templeman) ability to surprise us all with something amazing.

Last Offence

This is not a minor release for Modus Software. You can tell straight away that months' of hard work have gone into this game, which is more than reminiscent of Flashback. Flashback, on a budget.

It initially loads to the icon bar and when you click on its icon you are greeted with an ArtWorks graphic saying 'Modus Software'. Indeed, all the graphics that take up the whole screen are drawn in ArtWorks. They are commendable works of art but unfortunately they don't work in a game.

In the game, all the graphics are in 16 colours, which is a shame, as the

rest of the game runs in 256 (up to 16MB if you have a Risc PC). They are hand drawn, so you can't expect the fluidity of Flashback (which used motion capture). Nonetheless, the characters still move relatively smoothly.

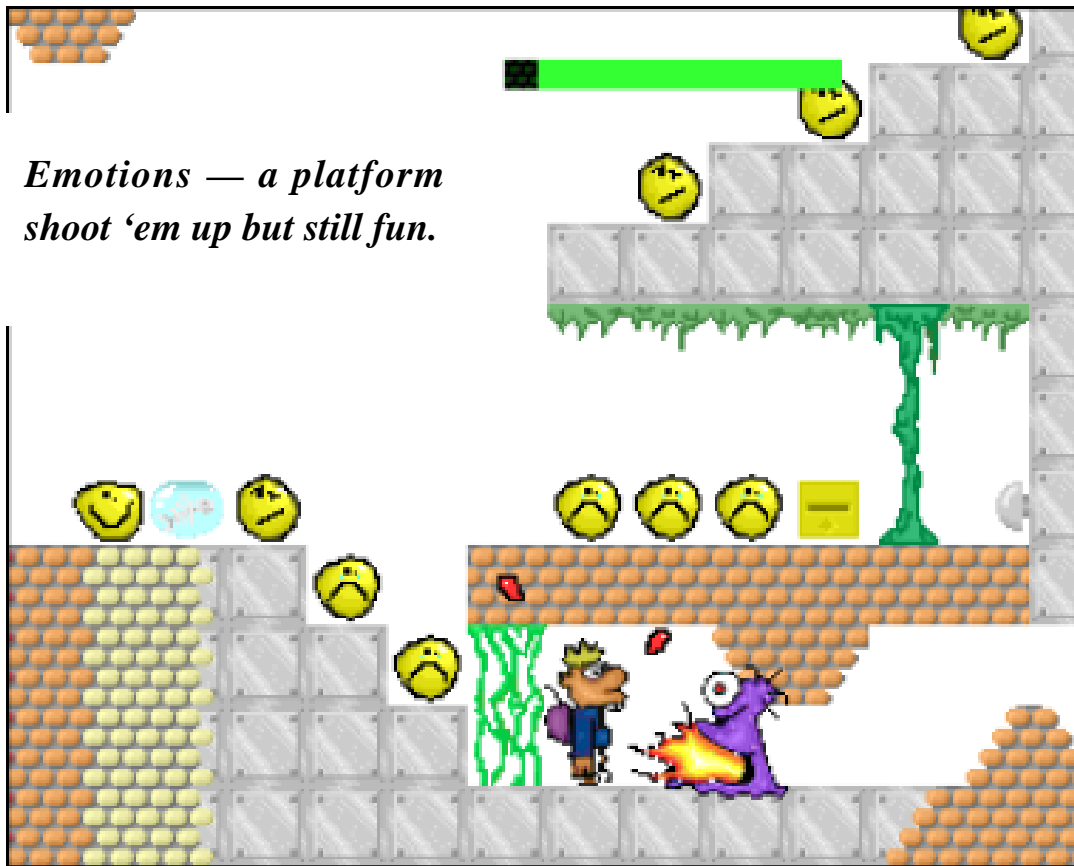
The music is very good, and I hope there is more in the full game. The SFX, however, are not of the same standard.

This is a technically impressive game but the gameplay isn't brilliant. The character is tricky to control, and the 'baddies' just spring up out of nowhere — even right upon you. It is almost impossible to dodge bullets and, when the character crawls along the ground, if you change direction his head won't. This looks astonishingly daft.

All in all, people with low end machines may like this game, but snobs like me with SA RPCs won't want to pay £30 when we've got Flashback.

Iron Dignity

I'm not going to say much about this, as it is only a preview, but every time I run it, I stare at the screen and say 'Wow'. This is a 'complex campaign simulation in a fictional world' and one hell of a demo.



Emotions — a platform shoot ‘em up but still fun.

If you don’t have StrongArm, forget this, but if you do, this should be top of your list. Sadly, that’ll be your next Christmas list unless something amazing happens — v. 0.20 has been floating around for yonks (I copied it off a computer at Wakefield when no-one was watching).



It will be a 3D game in up to 24bpp colour and it runs incredibly smoothly. The detail level of the graphics can be customised. The music is brilliant, although there are no SFX yet. This is one to watch out for.

Inferno

Inferno has been around a while now, and I’m not going to review it properly here as, if you’re the slightest bit bothered about games, you’ll know about this little gem. It’s an action packed game, with the object being to extinguish fires with a little robot. It costs £9.99. Buy it.

Emotions

This is a game of the kind that you can’t get away from — platform shoot ‘em ups. They are getting a tad dated, with games like Eternal Destiny and Iron Dignity stealing the limelight, but they are still so much fun.

You need skill to write a platform game, but to write a good platform game you need a special ingredient. Whatever it is, *Emotions* has it by the sackful. At first, it looked innocent and violence free. At second...

You play the character of Henky Penky, who is on the search for Emotions. He must find the exit to each level and pick up bonus Emotions in the form of yellow faces on the way.

After a few goes at this, I realised that Henky is just as adept at operating guns and chainsaws as he is at picking up boxes and carrying his purple rucksack.

At some points you have to pick up an access card to open dooways to continue on the level. If you really get stuck, though, there are some land mines lying around the place (handy) but you have to use them carefully. Although these little 'puzzles' make the game interesting, if you get anything wrong you often find you're stuck and need to restart the level.

The introduction is very nice, and you know from that that this is going to be something good. The graphics are cute(?), the music brilliant and the gameplay spot on. I have one



Henky Penky — searching for emotions with a chainsaw.

complaint, though. When you kill the monsters, you expect the screen to drip with blood, as in *Hamsters* or *DinoSaw*. In short, it doesn't.

This is a brilliant game, and I will almost certainly buy it. The great thing is, it's only £19.95.

Wizard Apprentice

This is weird. It's a puzzle game with decent graphics. You immediately think of *Pushy*, the PD game, but whereas the graphics in *Pushy* are good, in *Wizard* they are brilliant.

Upon loading, you are greeted with a rippling 'Fantasia' logo, with that being replaced by an advert boasting 'An Acorn game you can proudly show off to PC/console owners' and features such as '100 levels', '19 MBytes of hi-res graphics', '3 MBytes of music and SFX' and

‘Level editor’. Sounds good, looks good, what next?

I obediently pressed space and found a screen full of purple ladders, magic mushrooms, rocks (grey and multi-coloured) and a wizard apprentice. In the background was a very strange picture.

The object is to pick up objects such as flowers, mushrooms, and flying mushrooms. Unfortunately, your character cannot jump up or leap, so he has to fill in gaps in the ground with rocks. He can push one rock at a time, and his magical hat protects him from up to 10 falling rocks. There is also a second character — a little furry ball — who has all the skills of Wizard Apprentice and doubles up as a rock. You need him on some of the levels.

Gameplay is generally good, although you can’t afford to make a single mistake — do and you need to restart the level. This can be frustrating. The puzzles remind you of *Pushy*, albeit *Pushy* with gravity. It’s not the most original of games and it doesn’t pretend to be, but for hardcore puzzlers this will keep you amused for months. Oh yeah, and the graphics are streets ahead of anything we’ve seen before.

The music is as weird as the rest of

the game and there is no SFX in the demo so I can’t comment on it (there will be some in the full game).

This will get a mixed reaction, but I like it.

Epilogue

Well, it looks like the games drought is finally clearing up. It’s a fantastic time, not just for gaming but for the Acorn in general and we can expect this to lead to many positive changes in RISC OS (and Galileo?!) gaming, not just commercially but in the public domain as well.

We are now capable of doing things with our computers that we didn’t dream of a few months back and, with the advent of the StrongARM, we can expect to see some real killers next year. All the titles reviewed here are from relatively new companies, which is a good sign. And although I talk about gamers taking advantage of the new technology, it’s nice to see that Arc users are still catered for. This is something that wouldn’t happen in the PC world.

Expect some real changes happening over the next couple of years. Happy gaming!

For information about these games, see next page.

Eternal Destiny

Price: £35.00 (including p&p)

Supplier: Robert Templeman
1 Fairfax Ave, Didsbury
Manchester, M20 6AJ

Email:
mbcaprt@mphhpd.ph.man.ac.uk
Web:
mphhpc.ph.man.ac.uk/~mbcaprt/
DESTINY.html

Due for release in early March.

Last Offence

Price: £30

Supplier: Modus Software
PO Box 3148, Cumbernauld
Glasgow, G67 2YB

Tel: 01236 722202

Email:
modus@digibank.demon.co.uk

Iron Dignity

Price: To be announced

Supplier: Frank Föhl
Siemensstr. 7
71636 Ludwigsburg, Germany

Email: foehl@rus.uni-stuttgart.de

*Not ready for release at the time of
going to press.*

Inferno

Price: £9.99

Supplier: Paradise
12 Kings Close, Longburton
Nr Sherborne, Dorset, DT9 5PW

Email: paradise@pobox.com
Web: pobox.com/~paradise

Emotions:
Search for Humanity

Price: £19.95 + £1 p&p

Supplier: The Datafile
PO Box 175
Weston-Super-Mare, BS23 4PU

Tel/Fax: 01934 644046

Email:
sales@datafile.demon.co.uk
Web: www.datafile.demon.co.uk

Wizard Apprentice

Price: £24.95

Supplier: The Datafile
PO Box 175
Weston-Super-Mare, BS23 4PU

Tel/Fax: 01934 644046

Email:
sales@datafile.demon.co.uk
Web: www.datafile.demon.co.uk

BETT Report

“I don’t think you’ll have much joy,” said a colleague in the staff room. “My husband went on Wednesday and he said there was practically nothing for Acorns at BETT.”

Reading Tree materials: Rhymes and Analogies. They have also brought out two Primary Maths packs, some very interesting new science stuff and some secondary curriculum modules

Chris Price casts a critical eye over the Acorn offerings at the big educational show and writes a favourable report.

That’s interesting. It’s not the way I saw it! As a general overview I think it is a fair point that there are now few companies who cater *exclusively* for the Acorn market. The big money is in the Wintel market and they can’t afford to ignore it but most of the companies I encountered were marketing everything in triple format, Acorn, Apple and PC, but certainly *hadn’t* forgotten the Acorn market.

on Mapping, Energy and History, with more promised. They have also produced a Secondary Clipart collection using their proprietary Playbook browser. This all seems to mark a new area for Sherston to explore as they have, hitherto, been known for primary materials. As I said, they are marketing everything now in triple format and Acorn is certainly *not* forgotten.

Having had a quick scan round, I headed for friends at Sherston Software. The stand, as usual, was humming with activity. They have an updated version of Animated Numbers, to accompany the re-vamped Animated Alphabet, which looked good and some new Oxford

Busy

Onto the Valiant stall where, aside from their excellent Roamer, they were marketing *SenSci* a new control box and *Adventures of Hilary*, described as an adventure in Control. The stand was quite busy so I didn’t see either of these items in action.

Potential Software is not a name I'd heard before but they were there, marketing other peoples' wares but also a keyboard with a lower case set of keys. Now there's a bright idea for primary and infant. Why hasn't somebody thought of that before?

Cambridge Software House were marketing their King Arthur CD and Cromwell the Firefighter, which has been produced in conjunction with Durham Fire Services and is designed to make children more aware of the dangers of fire and their sources.

YITM (or Yorkshire Interactive Thompson Multimedia to give them their full title) have produced a wide variety of CDs; perhaps the most important being the transfer of Nelson's *Wellington Square* reading scheme on to disk. There were many others including *Science Explorer* and *Maths Explorer* and, looking at their catalogue I became aware that it was Apple format stuff that was being sidelined in favour of Acorn.

APDL were marketing two new products: a CD of educational resources (basically 5,000 drawfiles and sprites with an educational

application) and a CD called *Earth in Space*, written by a teenager but which still looked quite good.

Ant Ltd were marketing a new version of their Internet Suite, a new Internet Server and a Web Tool which allows you to download a website and browse through it off line, keeping all the links active.

Canon were marketing a new printer, *BubbleJet 4300*, which is claimed to give better, clearer, print. The examples I saw were certainly very good. Nearby, Swallow Systems were putting their Mark2 Pip and Pixie Roamers (akin to what Valiant produce) through their paces.

Lego Dacta were showing off their range of products but were particularly marketing an Early Structures Group Pack which seemed to be of particularly good value.

It was at this point that I bumped into a bloke from school that I hadn't seen for 20 years so the next bit of reporting got a bit delayed!!

Logotron are another company who refuse to believe that the Acorn

market is about to roll over and die (a definite change from last year when they were being distinctly cagey). They are marketing a new version of *Picturepoint* and some new files for their database program *Pinpoint*. They also had on show *Music Studio*, which is described as a notation program. At this point I just had to nod and try to look intelligent as this was completely beyond your very unmusical correspondent! They are also marketing two titles from the BBC Look and Read series: *The Legend of the Lost Keys* and *Captain Crimson*.

Passing the NCET stand with its *National Grid For Learning* provoked the usual battery of questions ‘Have the government got the money/willpower/desire to see this one through?’ and ‘What do we do now they have reinforced their desire to emphasise the three Rs?’ and ‘Where does all this leave IT in the classroom?’ These questions have to be answered in the near future, especially as the sums that I have seen bandied about just don’t add up.

Ecolog were marketing a very neat little data handling package called *Data Logger* with a pack of sensors to

go with it. I bought one of those! Very impressed I was!

Sibelius were marketing some new scanning software but I didn’t manage to get near enough to have a good look at it. They were also marketing the latest version of their musical notation software.

CCS have produced a program for Algebra like their *Magic Maths* program, as well as their One Million Worksheet series for generating worksheets. They also have a new report writing system: *Pupil Reporting Made Easy*. As a teacher I am ambivalent about this.

Finally to R-Comp who were presenting their file control system *Locksmith*, for keeping unwanted people out of the most treasured areas of your machine, and *Site Master*, a website management system which allows you to monitor your site if you are in the habit of changing it frequently. It will generally check for errors and will flag up if you have inadvertently changed a piece of the site and lost a link.

Acorn dead? I hardly think so...

Around The Clubs

The Christian Acorn User Group **Reporter: Colin Randall**

I am an Oxfordshire Vicar who was persuaded about six years ago that an Acorn system would be the best for my work in the parish. My main requirement was for good DTP but I wanted to run some Bible software and have a database as well. My

My motives were entirely selfish; I wanted to get ideas from others and form a pressure group to get some good quality church specific software.

Our very first Newsletter, in September 1994, was launched at a very appropriate time. The joint winners of the national Parish

The Rev Colin Randall explains how he founded the group which unites Christian Acorn users and provides them with news, information and a PD library.

initial set-up was an A4000 using Impression and running BibleMaster and a Data Developments church membership package under the PC emulator.

Magazine competition that year were both Acorn-produced publications and we also learnt that an Acorn Bible software package was due to be launched: ExpLAN's HolyBible.

I was very happy with what I had but felt somewhat isolated as Oxfordshire is not a county where schools used Acorns. I was sure there must be other Christians and Churches that did use Acorns and put a flyer in Archive to see if there were others interested in forming a Christian Acorn User Group.

Since that time the Christian Acorn User Group (known as XAUG to avoid confusion with the 'C' Acorn User Group) has exercised a useful role. From the outset there has been a very close relationship with ExpLAN, which has seen HolyBible develop into arguably the world's best piece of Bible software, and several members



have been involved in producing third party resources for HolyBible. The Newsletter itself has tried to balance articles on both specific Christian software and also the church use of general software. Apart from DTP, we have had articles on the Church use of Sibelius, Eureka!, ProCAD and Statistics. We have our own Web Site and a small but growing PD library. The 'pressure group' aspect is still there, and we have recently seen Church House Publishing market an Acorn version of 'Patterns for Worship'.

The one disappointing feature has been in 'renewals', in that a number of people seem to join for a year and then fall off. The annual renewal rate

has been about 50% although the positive feedback is that the Newsletter is good. I suspect this is a problem other groups have. I know that the PC orientated Church Computer User Group do. Nevertheless there is a steady stream of new enquiries and membership has been just over the hundred mark for the last three years.

Since my beginning, I have moved onto a Risc PC and although I have a PC card I now only use it for 'sourcing' stuff to make HolyBible resources, for example the IVP New Bible Commentary. I am as committed to Acorn as I was at the beginning and I believe there is no better set-up for Church use.

XAUG Membership costs £4 a year and you get two Newsletters and a Membership Directory.

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The Web Site is at:

www.acorn.com/developers/explan

Coming in Eureka 26

In Eureka's Summer issue, which arrives in May, we look at a year in the life of an Acorn user group, compare two Organiser programs and review, among others, the Observess expert system shell and DrawWorks Designer.

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IMPORTANT CHANGES
See pages 62 - 64

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